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TOWNS

VILLAGES AND SCHOOLS

VOL. II

REMINISCENCES

CHIEFLY OF TOWNS, VILLAGES AND SCHOOLS

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BY THE

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SUCCESSIVELY PERPETUAL CURATE OF MORETON PINCKNEY, NORTHANTS
RECTOR OF CHOLDERTON, WILTS: RECTOR OF PLYMTREE, DEVON
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IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. II.

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CHAPTER LXVIII.

THE WAYLANDS.

I HAVE headed the chapter 'The Waylands,' because it would be really quite preposterous to place the husband at the head of the concern, and it would never have done to put the lady. Mrs. Wayland became, indeed, the most intimate lady friend of the Mozley family for half her own life, and from my own boyhood to middle age; but Mr. Wayland preceded and long survived her.

Daniel Sheppard Wayland must have been from infancy, what he continued to be when a bundle of old bones holding together at all sorts of angles, a most interesting character. Disposed as I am to strike against fluency, suavity, and even sweetness with no acidity in it, I always felt it a pleasure to be in his society—a pleasure and a profit too. I suppose he was from Somersetshire, for I think his second name was derived from the well-known family in the Frome district.

He had an American brother, and in due time a nephew, President of Brown University, with both of

whom he occasionally interchanged letters. When at Rome fifteen years ago, I saw the name in the list of arrivals at our hotel, and looking down the long dining-table I singled out immediately the black hair, the aquiline nose, the well-cut features, and the bland expression of a Wayland. He was governor of one of the States, and, on my accosting him, was much interested to hear of his uncle, or great-uncle, of whom indeed he had some things to tell me. He asked questions; but, as our friend had long been no more, there could be no practical result: and perhaps I was wrong to feel disappointed when the American came across me several times afterwards, without reverting to his English relative, even though knowing that he was no common person.

An uncle sent Wayland to St. Edmund Hall, as I have told in my chapter with that title in my former 'Reminiscences.' It may be as well to mention here that I have been severely called to account for omitting all mention of Daniel Wilson, who was then at St. Edmund Hall, who won the prize for an essay on Common Sense, and became Bishop of Calcutta. In gentler terms I have been reminded that Wheeler, a clergyman of high culture as well as Evangelical principles, was with Wayland at the Hall, and remained his friend through life. Now, no doubt it was a serious omission in my book, as well as a loss to myself; but the truth is Wheeler had never been more than a name to me, and latterly the name had slid out of memory.

The chance medley that scatters young English clergymen in all directions, making the smallest

accident determine a long career full of consequences, threw Wayland into the division of Lindsey, which is the northern half of Lincolnshire. After holding smaller posts, or preferments, he became Vicar of Kirton, where my father had been at the Grammar School till 1788, and where there was a gaol and a sessions-house.

Wayland became gaol chaplain, and upon taking duty for the first time felt some uneasiness at finding himself in close quarters with a crowd of very unpleasant-looking characters. Nor was he reassured by observing on the reading-desk two pistols, ready cocked, one on each side of the prayer-book. 'What are these for?' he anxiously inquired. The warder explained that he need have no fear of the criminals; but there were some lunatics among them, and they could not be depended on. 'If one of them should spring at you, shoot him instantly.' Happily, the occasion never occurred.

Seven years after our first acquaintance with Dr. Sampson, the most intimate friend of our family, who was now fighting climate for love at Madras, and three months before the birth of my brother James, Mr. Wayland appears for the first time in our family records. On June 6, 1813, he writes to my father:—

MY DEAR SIR,—To accommodate Mr. Thorold, to whom it would be inconvenient to take the duty of Gainsborough Church on Sunday next, I have agreed to serve it myself on that day. I trouble you with this note to tell you that as you have been so friendly as to beg me to make your house my headquarters when I am at Gainsborough, I will have the pleasure of coming to you on Friday evening or Saturday morning. You see I make no scruple of accepting your obliging

offer of attention and kindness. Not from the motives which a certain doctor might impute to me, such as drinking wine which has been a long time in a merchant's cellar, but because I love to feel that I am welcome, and because I am never better pleased than in the free and unrestrained intercourse to be found in such a house as yours. With my best compliments to Mrs. Moseley (*sic*), Believe me, my dear sir,

Your obliged friend and obedient servant,
D. S. WAYLAND.

I have always associated Mr. Wayland with Dr. Sampson, but no two men could be more unlike in most respects. Wayland had a troublesome time of it at Kirton, and suffered some persecution of a very cruel sort, of which I shall have a word to say. About the time of our removal to Derby he obtained the curacy of Grayingham, in that neighbourhood, where there was a house he could take a wife to. This he did, before long.

The happy couple, who had been tried by a seven years' engagement, relieved by continual correspondence, and something like *amantium iræ* occasionally, arrived one evening at our house at Derby, in May 1817, on their way to the bride's new home. I well remember their arrival. My father was so little prepared for her appearance that upon her entering the room he was allowing her to pass, looking for the bride behind her.

I did not hear this at the time, but I did hear immediately of the catastrophe that had occurred. The box containing every article of clothing, beyond what the happy couple had on their backs, had been cut away from the ledge behind the chaise. It was then a very common robbery. In the dark, on a bad

road, or up hill, a man would hold on to the hind part of the chaise, cut the cords, and bring the box to the ground without a chance of its being perceived. He would make away with his spoil, and on the arrival of the vehicle at the next stage no one could say where the deed had been done.

But what struck me more—for the impression remains on my mind to this day—was the high spirits and brilliant conversation of the bride, under this most provoking disaster, and the bland tones and quiet humour of her husband. I think we consoled ourselves with the hope that the contents of the missing box were not after all so invaluable but that a very brief visit to a draper might more than replace them.

The bride on this occasion was the daughter of Mr. Boyce, the incumbent of a good living not far from the metropolis, supposed to possess independent means, and much in society. He died rather suddenly, and then it was found that there was nothing for the family. Miss Boyce, who had to provide for herself and help the others, did the only thing that could be done. For some years she accepted situations as governess, in a considerable number and variety of households, being at once eminently fit and eminently unfit for the position.

She was eminently fit, for I think she was, without exception, the best talker I ever heard—and good talking is indispensable to good teaching. The husband was one of the best talkers I ever met, and he was never so happy as when listening to his wife's talk, without breaking its flow. Mrs. Wayland was

well up to character, to modes of faith, to the world, and to general literature. She had strong, not to say bigoted, religious convictions, mitigated by a just estimate of religious personages. I should say that, while an enthusiastic admirer of Evangelicals as she found them in books, an Evangelical in the flesh met with justice from her, and no more. She was very fond of flowers and of nature, and had an eye for the picturesque. She could tell no end of amusing stories, hitting off exactly the tone, the style, and the manner of the people concerned. She had read much, and had made use of it.

On the other hand, she could not be called accomplished. I don't think she could hammer out a psalm tune on the piano, or sing the stave of a hymn as well as any village girl. Her knowledge of French must have been small indeed—she certainly could not talk in it.

Is there such a thing as the soul of beauty, the very essence, however impalpable, apart from all direct manifestation? If there be, then one might have ventured to call Mrs. Wayland one of the most beautiful women in the world. She was not so in physiognomy, in form, in movement, or even in plumage—that is, in the style of dress naturally springing out of the inner ideal. She was so in her voice, in her handwriting, in her style, and in most of the workings of her heart and soul. I used to say that any one hearing Mrs. Wayland in the next room, without having seen her, and possessing no cue but the rich and mellow tones of her voice and her expressive modulations—nay, any one seeing only

the ease and grace of her handwriting, and the quiet vigour of her style, must conclude very favourably as to her personal appearance.

In matter of fact, I used, quite unintentionally, and without malice, to liken her to the ugliest of the foul fiends set upon Clarence in our illustrated Shakespeare; and, to this day, I could not better call the lady to remembrance than by consulting that volume. There was not a graceful line in her swarthy countenance. She was absolutely without taste in dress; without a notion of colour, or of cut. She would go into a shop and buy the most hideous thing in it. Her wardrobe was such as to suggest a frequent regret that the rogue who stole her box on her first visit to us had not repeated the robbery. With her own hand she painted her drawing-room much as a South Sea Islander might have done with the few pigments at his command. Beauty there was in the family, for a sister was beautiful in the ordinary sense of the word; but in our friend the sublime essence found an abnormal expression. I scarcely remember any one who had so much reason to long for the time when this outer tabernacle will be removed, and the spiritual nature revealed.

Thus her graces, her tastes, and her powers went in certain directions, somewhat to her loss in other directions. For each excellence there was some defect. Nobody could fail to admire her, but to many she gave some occasion for criticism now and then, if it were only in a smile. Any lady of fashion must have thought her half witted, or half blind. She must have amused her husband's pupils a good

deal, for she amused us, who were much less critical. When talking—that is, nearly always—she was so absorbed, that I have repeatedly seen her flood the tea-tray by forgetting to stop the urn, and pour out half the teapot into a single cup and saucer.

Long before our acquaintance with this lady—indeed, I think in the days of her prosperity—she had seen much of a man whom I only knew as the handsomest man at Oxford, and a gentlemanly as well as clever Examiner, but who became Principal of Brasenose, and Bishop of Chichester. His sister became her long and attached friend and correspondent. I was under the impression that Mrs. Wayland thought him rather a heartless personage. It may be, because, as a rule, very handsome men and women are thought heartless by the majority of the opposite sex. I remember a very pretty confectioner's daughter, or assistant, in St. Mary Hall Lane, whom the Oriel undergraduates thought without a heart at all, so exclusively intent was she on selling her ices and buns. On looking through the volume before me, I see it was imagination Mr. Gilbert wanted. Perhaps it was because he could not follow his own sister through all her many vagaries. The sister was very clever, and had been good-looking, but somehow came to be, as she expressed it, blighted, scathed, blackened, and all that, but still rather amusing under these melancholy circumstances. I seem to remember that the brother was said to be rather shy of introducing his sister, or sisters, to his Oxford friends; but Oxford is not exactly the place for blighted beings—at least, not

for those of the female sex. Mrs. Wayland paid off the people who scathed and blighted so well—indeed, in their own coin—that she made capital out of them. So she was rather amused with her correspondent's melancholy submission to her adverse destiny.

The lady I have by no means exhausted, but will return to the husband: He was a very good scholar of the rare old school. Horace, I always knew to be his favourite author; but I am reminded I must not omit Cicero, Demosthenes, Sophocles, and Pindar. He had taught a daughter Latin so thoroughly, that upon her losing her eyesight she followed him easily and pleasantly while he read to her Cicero in the original. He was imbued with the classics, and at Bassingham felt just as Ovid did on the shores of the Black Sea. He never saw the words 'Consul Romanus,' I remember his saying, without that personage and his train of lictors sweeping by him. He was equally and thoroughly up to French and Italian literature.

He was a ready talker, intelligent and patient listener, and a fluent expounder. He was never moody, silent, or dull. I don't think he repeated himself. He had always at his tongue's end the sayings of the witty and the wise. His manners were pleasant, even though a little too fine and mannerish. He protested against humbug, specially the great 'hum' of society, as freely as if he lived in a tub. He had met with many great people, and there had always arisen mutual regard. Through his old Oxford friend, Mr. Joyce, of Hitcham, he was still in

hail of the great world. He wrote easily, smoothly, and pleasantly.

His case is one of many, showing, as I cannot help feeling, a great want in our Church. It has no places or incomes for literary, or scientific, or philosophical characters. It pays only for parochial, or cathedral, or episcopal services, all of them, if duly discharged, occupying the time and taxing the strength of ordinary men. No doubt there are hundreds—indeed, thousands—of men who receive incomes from the Church, and display her honours, with the scantiest possible discharge of duty. They enjoy to the full the required freedom from daily and distracting occupations necessary for the pursuit of studies. But these men start with the fact that they are doing wrong: breaking their word, faithless to a solemn trust, setting an ill example, and no better than church robbers. It is, too, only a small proportion of the men enjoying ecclesiastical incomes and titles, and doing nothing for it, who compensate for that manifest wrong by any kind of literary service. They are generally men who prefer idleness, or pleasure: travelling, sporting, gardening, or reading just to amuse themselves. The world does not rate such men very high, but they take care to keep peace with the world; and even if they set up for saints, which some of them do, they establish a *modus vivendi* with the world, in good houses and gardens, good tables and select social circles. So what really is a great desideratum in the Church has fallen into the hands of those who are neglecting their sworn duties to their Church, and giving the Church little or nothing in the way of compensation.

CHAPTER LXIX.

BASSINGHAM.

IN 1819 Mr. Wayland took the curacy of Bassingham, leaving Grayingham, but retaining the living of Kirton in Lindsey. Strange as it may seem to those who know only the first-mentioned place, this was a move from comparative barbarism to comparative civilisation. The north of Lincolnshire, from my childhood, I always heard of as a very rough place, where people did what was right in their own eyes, there being no strong body of clergy, or of gentry, or towns of any importance, to check headstrong and corrupt rural tendencies. The region was separated from the rest of the world by the German Ocean, the broad and dangerous estuary of the Humber, and the floods and marshes of the Isle of Axholme. It is not redeemed by picturesque scenery, or even by great fertility. Nobody used to go there except on business, or to take the ferry for Hull, or to go to the most dreary of all watering-places, near what I remember as what was then the miserable little port of Grimsby. All my father's stories of Kirton indicated a reign of misrule. I believe that besides the rude aborigines, there were people who had gone there to be out of the way, and who found others who had gone there on the like plan of life.

As in many other corners and wastes of this island, half a century has transformed the Division of Lindsey and all the north of the shire. There are

railways all over it, and a steam ferry almost as good as a bridge across the Humber. Grimsby is now connected by rail with Manchester, and puts in a respectable appearance among English ports. It has large docks, with a water-tower beating the Campanile at Venice. Cleathorpes is now the resort of excursionists, and half way between Gainsborough and Hull thousands are at work quarrying ironstone.

No one who had ever heard of Kirton could be surprised to hear that Mr. Wayland left it a disappointed man. Writing to my father, he says :—

> Seven years ago I entered the parish, you know, with the intention and the desire of doing my duty among them to the best of my abilities, and I know and feel I have within me the power of being satisfied in obscurity and in poverty, if I am cheered by the consciousness of usefulness, and by the affection of those whose good opinion I have never deserved to lose. All my prospects of usefulness, all the bright visions which cheered the obscurity of my lot with the radiance of Heaven, have closed in utter darkness. . . .

But what was now the brighter, or more promising spot where Mr. Wayland was about to make a fresh start, in the hope of at least profiting by the experience of a failure? Bassingham was a living of exceptional value, at least in the eyes of the Fellows of Corpus Christi College. The income indeed was somewhat under 800*l.* a year, but it could be enjoyed without residence, as a comfortable sinecure—that is, after throwing a small percentage of the income to a curate-in charge. Lincolnshire was rich in ecclesiastical revenues of this convenient character. A clergyman would take a living, well knowing what it was, indeed having known

all about it for many years, and would shortly inform his Bishop that the air of the place was very depressing, and that he, or his wife, or his horses, or his dogs did not enjoy their usual health and spirits there. On these grounds he easily obtained leave of non-residence for a time, and for more times.

The Bishop probably felt that even a half-, or quarter-paid curate might serve the parish better than a man whose idea was to suck the blood of the parish and take his pleasure far away from it.

But last century and far into this there was absolutely no conscience anywhere in England in this matter, which of course means that Satan had almost undisputed sway over the distribution and use of the Church's temporalities. There is a little book of that period called 'A Converted Family,' which records how a young man, upon being converted himself, converted his father also from the grievous sin of card-playing. The converted father held a living which he never went near, and never had anything to do with, except take his tithe and once a year send a bundle of tracts for distribution.

Wayland himself, by the way, was a non-resident, for he still held the vicarage of Kirton. So truth compels me to say that if the Vicar of Kirton had a few things to say of his parishioners, they had their reply.

And what sort of a village was it where this very unique couple were about to run and to complete a long career? Bassingham is a very scattered village, about half way between Lincoln and Newark. The greater part of the parish lies low, very low. Bassing-

ham Fen, not a mile from the parsonage, must be a mile across when the water predominates. At times the water shrinks, and the ground dries and cracks. I remember Mr. Wayland telling me that he had had hardly a death in his parish for a year and a half, I think literally not one death, when the Fen dried up after a drought, and then came twenty deaths in a fortnight. All about the parish were deep dykes, well kept and well bridged; very good farmhouses, cottages, and shops, all in red brick, and a great air of well-to-do-ness.

Within a walk was picturesque scenery, meandering brooks, high banks, groves, and the old family mansion of the Bromheads, at Thurlby, recently made famous by one of our South African heroes. Three miles to the east you began to ascend the Cliff, a long wall of hills, battlemented with villages and lofty spires, and looking across Nottinghamshire into Derbyshire. At the time of one of my visits Oriel College was building a pretty parsonage on the Cliff. I went to see it, and thought I should like it for my own. On the Cliff, too, were gentlemen's seats, with plantations, shrubberies, and high walls, which you had to dodge if you wished to see the views. Not very far off was Brant Broughton, held by Warburton for some years. Mr. Wayland went with me to see the church, in the nave of which Warburton took his daily exercise and meditated on the Divine Legation. At the date of my visit this tradition would be within one long living memory. What I chiefly remember was that the lay impropriator had allowed the chancel-windows to fall out

of repair, and had filled up one of the largest with solid masonry.

There were also, within reach, various historical ruins. One parish consisted of a castle, with walls, a moat, and the turret staircase of a church. The living population was a single increasing human family, and every variety of livestock. Wayland undertook the duty for love, till the Bishop made the incumbent pay him 10*l.* a year for it. But all he had to do was to go over at certain intervals and 'church' the farmer's wife in her own parlour. I went over with him on one of these occasions. The farmer was very stout; so, too, was his lady; so, too, the children; so, too, the pictures of prize animals hung all over the walls; so, too, every living thing we saw about.

It may seem that such a region, with all its drawbacks, need not be dull, and that if people ever found it dull it would be their own fault. No doubt if anybody finds a place dull, the dulness must be partly of his own making. But I remember the Waylands mentioning incidentally that a young incumbent not far from them had brought home a young bride. The marriage had been duly gazetted in the papers, and the church bells rung on their arrival. The day after it the lady arrayed herself in lavender satin, and posed herself for the expected visitors. So she sat for two months, as it happened, in very cold weather, without a single call. She then, at last, doffed her lavender satin, and had never to don it again.

I am reminded that this does not give a correct

idea of the society to be found in that part of Lincolnshire, and that the Waylands themselves had as many neighbours as they could wish for. They were sometimes inconveniently beset, or surprised. On a very dull day, Mrs. Wayland had put on her roughest garden costume, and was busy trimming the flower-beds, when suddenly there walked into the garden her Coleby neighbours, Mrs. Trevenen Penrose and Miss Arnold. It is true that nobody can expect society all at once. It has a beginning and a growth. Any one who sticks to his post, and is himself sociable, is sure to find himself well frequented before long. The Waylands would have gathered a neighbourhood round them anywhere. I can nevertheless deem it very possible that a couple, of no extraordinary personal attractions, cast three or four miles from any other village, and without means of locomotion beyond what nature has given, might then have found some parts of Lincolnshire an almost Siberian banishment.

Bassingham Parsonage was half very old, half very new; not picturesque, but commodious. The old front had a separate staircase with a separate entrance from the garden. A bedroom in it was said to be haunted after a fashion: the sleeper was sure to wake in the night with the sense of a deep horror. When I came down to breakfast I found myself the object of inquisitive looks, but I had nothing to tell. I had from my childhood been struggling with hobgoblins of various kinds, but had finally got rid of them. Mr. Joyce, of Hitcham, had testified to the truth of the legend, but then he had seldom slept out

of his own house, which was a warren of little children and pupils, and he might never have known what it was to sleep alone at the top of a rotten old staircase opening into a garden.

When Mr. Wayland had been over twenty years at Bassingham, his American nephew, the President of Brown University, came to England. He was staying at Birmingham, where a man of his position would be sure of an introduction to a large literary circle. From that centre of wealth and thought he visited the village of Bassingham, he had heard so much of, and he spent some days there. He could not contain his surprise at all he saw, the obstinate backwardness and 'unalterable fixedness' of the whole scene: the desolation of the village streets, the red-brick sheds, fences, and pigsties, the timber itself from Canada or Norway, the slovenly and wasteful hedge-rows, never in order, and harbouring weeds and vermin.

But what most surprised him was a custom which distinguishes England from all the world, and is really a national scandal. He could scarcely believe his eyes when he saw a well without a fence or wall rising above the ground level. As this is a very important matter, and much concerns our boasted character for humanity, I give Mr. F. Wayland's very words:—

> Surprised at the danger to which children must be exposed, I inquired whether this mode of constructing wells was common. On being answered in the affirmative, I asked whether children were not frequently drowned in the wells. I was informed that such accidents had happened, and it was said that two or three cases had occurred within a few years. Here the conversation

dropped. It did not seem that accidents of this kind furnished any reason for deviating from the mode of constructing wells which immemorial usage had established.

The American visitor had looked for a school after the New England fashion, in which all classes could get the education they severally wished, but he saw no school at all. How that was I know not. In 1832, ten years before this visit to Bassingham, I found a very good national school at Moreton Pinckney; but Oriel was the patron there, Corpus Christi at Bassingham, which made all the difference. He found everybody depending on some one else, and waiting for everybody else: the labourers looking to the farmers, the farmers to the landowners, and the landowners to quarter-day. Bassingham was all of the past, and had no future.

In this lifeless swamp he saw a couple, now indeed a family, that might have filled and graced any position. What was more, they collected some friends to meet him—clergymen and their wives; and these were interchanging notes on their parish work, with their hearts in it, and doing all within their sphere and their means. The parsonage was everywhere the centre, the only centre, of such activity as there was. Mr. Francis Wayland describes the mystery, without any attempt to solve it. The contrast to American life was so striking that he despaired of being able to present it adequately to his friends at home; and he accordingly persuaded Mrs. Wayland, then in failing health and strength, to promise a few tales of English life. She literally died in this work, for which she was not then equal, and which could not do her justice.

However, Mr. Francis Wayland published the fragmentary and unfinished tales in America, with an introduction of his own, from which I have already quoted, and must quote once again :—

> My aunt's powers of conversation were such as it has not been my good fortune to see surpassed. Her tender sympathy for suffering, her strong love of justice, her lofty scorn of oppression, at once flashed in her eye, glowed in her cheek, and trembled in her utterance. Though remarkable for that self-possession so common to all well-bred persons in England, the thrilling earnestness of her deeper tones reminded me of all I had read of the conversation of Mrs. Siddons.

Now truth compels me to add that either the host or the guest threw into the background what was really essential to a true account of Bassingham. There was another centre of activity ; there was a spirit of self-reliance and independence ; there was that which had more relation to the future than to the past. In the picture presented by the American guest there is not a hint of the iron organisation against which the curate and his wife had long maintained an unequal struggle. Not, indeed, that the Wesleyan tyranny made Bassingham less English, or more American, for it was only the common incident of one religious monopoly set up against another.

Such was the region which no ordinary couple were now to enlighten and even to warm, and over which they did reign, after a fashion, as long as they had yet to live. Wayland had already made the discovery that he had not himself strength enough for steady parochial work, and that he required a helpmeet. Mrs. Wayland's force of character and powers of

expression seemed to show her born for the work. What seemed even more, she might be deemed to have been educated for it in a long period of trial. For seven years she had groaned under dependence, as she felt her employment, and desired that independence supposed to be nowhere found so entire as in a country parsonage. No doubt it is the day-dream of many a governess to emerge in that way into independence, and into power. The dream in this case was more than a dream, for the governess was engaged to a clergyman already an incumbent, and only waiting for something better, or for adequate means.

How then was the lady preparing for her accession to a destined realm? As one wretched mortal may criticise another, to be criticised in his turn, I suppose I may and must say that this poor woman did not go quite the right way to work. She recorded what she saw and heard, and did and felt, in the form of letters to her intended, seeking his sympathy under her many troubles. He kept all these letters, and in 1830, not quite long enough after date, he published them. They were very clever and amusing, and might almost be called too good to be buried, or destroyed, except that the Almighty is sometimes pleased to make a holocaust of the most precious things, as if to show that human measures of value are not the reckoning for Divine operation. The letters showed the lady never at home wherever she was, never in complete confidence, never quite in accord, neither mistress of the position nor servant in it, and without that true liberty and independence which the Apostle says even a slave possesses if he

has Christ for his Master. The very title of 'Dependence' which the lady or her husband gave to the book was its key-note and its condemnation.

CHAPTER LXX.

DEPENDENCE IN THE HOUSE.

SINCE writing the above I have looked for the volume, found it, and revived old memories. The writer must either have exaggerated, and even distorted, very much, or have been the victim of a most singular and distressing fatality. Were her troubles due to the particular stratum of society in which her openings lay? Was it a little drama of her own conception into which she disposed the inmates of every household she entered, whether fit or not, for the parts assigned? She may indeed have been very unfortunate—that is, the Almighty may have cast her into dark and dismal places, and taken her through a sea of tribulation. But that is a matter there can be no reasoning about.

As the letters were published only thirteen years after the writer's marriage, and her husband could not find it in his heart to omit or to qualify a single word, it was found at least necessary to omit the dates and the localities, and to designate persons by initials with a uniform departure from the true ones. I have now read through about half the volume, and I find that to do justice to it would far exceed my limits of space.

In the course of seven years Miss Boyce found herself in a great variety of households, constituting a fair sample of our boasted English private life. As she had no professional preparation for the work of teaching, she would hardly have been called a governess in these days. She regarded herself as a 'confidential person,' who need not be accomplished. Her first essay was as companion to a lady whose relations could do nothing with her. Miss Boyce struggled on for three years, but only records her sufferings. I grieve to think of three years of such talk as hers being sown on that barren sand; but I think there might still have been heather, gorse, or fern to show for it. Yet as the 'companion' did not change, I cannot be surprised to find the lady at the end of three years no better than she was at the beginning. Speaking generally, Miss Boyce says, 'my first impressions are seldom wrong.' This was modesty, for what she really felt was that her anticipations were always right.

Her remarks upon her own imperfect acquaintance with French illustrate her fixed determination to prove herself always in the right. In one of her situations, speaking of her pupils, she says:—

> The eldest has made some progress in French, but her mamma is so terribly afraid of her not acquiring the true Parisian accent, that she will not suffer her to read the language to any but a native. A very gentlemanly old abbé comes to hear her read; the grammatical part is entrusted to me. I always wonder at English mothers having so much anxiety on this point. I should, on the contrary, rather wish my daughter to speak French like an Englishwoman. At any rate I should be most particularly anxious that she should never be mistaken for a Frenchwoman.

A lady who really could teach nothing except to talk and write well, not being comparable in other respects to an ordinary governess, and who was, moreover, in her own eyes, a very good Christian, might have put up with some trifles. But if there was a squalling brat, or if she was left with the children a whole day 'like a chair or a table,' or if they were out of coal, or the keys were not to be found, or the laundress not sent for in time, or if she were asked to hear the girls practise their music for the master, Mr. Wayland was sure to hear of it, and, as it turned out, the world also.

But one example will suffice for the whole list of households successively visited and described by this Asmodeus in petticoats. It was the one example that raised a discussion as to the propriety, nay, the decency, of the publication. I should doubt whether it added much to the troubles of the lady who figures most conspicuously in the narrative, but it greatly exasperated some of her friends, who had already had to suffer a little on her account.

In a beautiful spot and in the midst of good society resided a couple, with everything to make them happy, as the phrase is. They had several daughters, ample means, health and strength, kind neighbours, and friends, not only good, but sufficiently great for all practical purposes. The lady's friends stood high in the religious and political world. The exceptional care taken in her own education suggests that she may early have been found a difficult subject. She had been educated by Hannah More. It does not much matter in what stage of that lady's convic-

tions this would be, for Hannah More was always a brilliant personage, and was always in brilliant society. As is well known, Dr. Johnson and his circle were much taken with her, and when I was in Somersetshire in 1827, the Bishop made a rule of calling upon her once a week, and my own tutor, Mr. Thomas Spencer, made periodical journeys to Barley Wood. My then boyish notion of her was that she kept a sort of literary court, at which it was a great honour to be presented. Indeed, I think it was even suggested to myself.

The lady who could thus charm all the world had not succeeded in winning over this particular pupil either to literature or to religion—that is, what she deemed to be such. For one reason or another, possibly because she would not marry as her friends wished, and they would not let her marry as she wished, the unfortunate object of their anxieties became what Miss Boyce describes as 'a forsaken old maid.' At last her friends married her to a gentleman of good figure, good looks, good character, and good circumstances, somewhat her junior—indeed much so, Miss Boyce seemed to think.

Both married with their eyes open, for the case of the lady, no longer young, was one of the standing topics of a numerous and inquisitive circle, and the gentleman was widely known for his strict religious principles. A sensible friend had almost gone down on his knees to persuade him not to make the offer. Miss Boyce was of opinion that he had been judicially blinded, or infatuated, for throwing away an

affection that would have made him happy. He had married the lady because her connections were higher than his own, and he felt flattered by the advances they made to secure him and get rid of her. Meanwhile, the rejected lady chose a single life, and Miss Boyce much desired the opportunity of letting her know how amply she had been avenged. She honestly avows she never could have found it in her heart to believe a man she loved was happy with another.

The tastes of this wretched couple, of whom one had taken counsel from despair, the other from a foolish ambition, were absolutely incompatible, and there never was a chance of assimilation or approximation. The wife liked the world, and society, and amusements, and theatres, and dances, and visits, and cards, and going about, and people with a good deal to say for themselves, and light literature. He hated them all, and steadfastly set his face against them, resolved that there should be nothing of the sort where he was. Unhappily, he had not the manner, or the resources, or even the will, for creating a neutral ground between these utter opposites.

He had no light talk, or literary talk, or scientific talk, or general topics. The lightest reading in his library consisted of an odd volume of Pope and his Letters, the 'Farmer's Journal,' Hannah More's 'Christian Morals,' and Gisborne's 'Duties of Women.' The possessor of this select library was taciturn, except when proclaiming the truth and laying down the law; and he was reserved, except when scolding

his wife at her own table in the presence of daughters and guests, or when telling what he conceived to be the truth about her behind her back.

The wife became more and more sad, silent, moody, fretful, irritable, and even ill-mannered. It became the case of two cliffs frowning one upon the other. Miss Boyce describes him as 'alone in his path'; while on the wife's side there was the silence of the grave on the hopes of a Christian; and every bad propensity and evil humour seemed nursed and encouraged to set in array against his peace.

As there was no talk, or plan, or system, on which they could agree, the education of the daughters was neglected, and the neighbourhood became sensible of a scandal which would reflect on them as well as on the unhappy couple. There happened, however, to be a great lady, who was, or thought herself, equal to the situation. She succeeded in persuading, or rather compelling, the parents—the father easily, the mother not quite so easily—that they must have a governess: a superior governess, to do for them not so much what teachers usually did, but what ordinary parents did also.

She commanded, and she was obeyed. She opened a correspondence with Miss Boyce, who had heard of her as an excellent Christian, but who was now shrewd enough to find something about her she did not quite like. This, however, was a question not of likes or dislikes, but of duty, and Miss Boyce appeared on the scene. At a glance she took a just measure of the situation and of all the people she had to deal with. She had seen them all with her mind's eye

before they actually met. 'I have no heart to go to these strangers,' she had told her intended. 'I quite shrink from her and all of them.' 'I have such a horror of the place.'

She arrived at the 'dismal-looking place' in the dusk, fancied it coloured black, and was reminded of the sombre tinge of Newgate. With the servants she immediately established a pleasant footing, but the mistress only grumbled at her through a very imperfect set of teeth. As she sat in silence, Miss Boyce studied her countenance by the rules of Lavater, and pronounced it most 'unpropitious' for 'a poor dependent.' 'How can I vegetate with such a woman?' she asks herself and her intended. The husband had a 'kind and benign aspect,' but he was evidently low-born, ill-bred, and less than half educated. Here was indeed, as they say in the north, 'a kettle of fish to fry.'

It was a good work Miss Boyce had to accomplish; there was no doubt of its necessity; but the matter was one of great difficulty and delicacy. In that most exclusive, most tender, and most susceptible of all social creations, an English household, she was to be an interloper, a third party, a traitor in the camp, dividing the house against itself. For a woman to side with the wife against the husband would not have been so unusual, or so revolting to taste; but to be the partisan and accomplice of a husband domineering over his wife, and withholding from her even the right to bring up her daughters as she pleased, seemed hardly less than a social crime.

Only on certain suppositions was it at all allow-

able. It must be assumed that the mother was not responsible for her actions, or capable of doing her duty; that she required some one to do her duty for her, and meanwhile to keep her in check; and that the lady undertaking this arduous and disagreeable post must be one not likely to aspire to a higher place in the house, or sink to a lower, or indeed to inspire any feeling beyond proper respect. These conditions were fulfilled in Miss Boyce's case, for she was not a woman to every man's taste, and her heart and hand were deeply engaged to her future husband. So she set about her task, in full confidence that Heaven had laid it upon her, and that she had to bear all its disagreeables as so many trials in duty's course. From the first she had a distinct forecast of these disagreeables and these trials, and could not doubt that the intermediaries who had placed her there saw things as she did. Even before seeing the lady, she had extracted from the unwilling neighbours that she had 'a terrible temper.'

Now this is a woman's question. It is quite impossible for a man to suppose himself in such a case. No man, young or old, heart free or ever so deeply engaged, could enter a household on the understanding that he is to help the wife to gag the husband, tie his hands behind his back, and thrust him into a corner. An ordinary man would die rather than do this, even if he saw that the deed would have to be done by somebody in some fashion or another. No man, to call a man, will do what he feels to be such dirty work, nor will any sensible man guarantee himself against the temptation inseparable

from it. But taking an outside view of the case, and regarding things as they are, and women as they are, I cannot conclude that Mrs. Wayland was wrong in taking this position, and in holding it as long as her physical strength, or her self-respect, allowed.

CHAPTER LXXI.

DEPENDENCE IN THE HOUSE.

IN the work itself Miss Boyce felt a pleasure and found a success. The father recognised it. Before long the neighbourhood did also. The great lady who had given her orders to the mother to delegate her functions to a superior governess, and whom the governess had expected to see much more than she did, came at last to see how the experiment worked. It was an inspection by a general in command of a district. Miss Boyce had imagined her a woman with a soul, conversing with souls. Possibly the illusion had been strengthened by one of her own pupils telling her the lady was a Methodist like papa. Miss Boyce was now only struck with her determined look, her dauntless courage, and her relentless purpose. She had early come to the conclusion that she had herself been smuggled into the house. It was now evident that she had been forced in at the point of the bayonet, supported by cannon in position. The great lady saw, approved, and departed, but not without leaving a blessing. In a very pointed manner

she said the children were particularly fortunate in meeting with such a governess; and this unlucky speech, as Miss Boyce calls it, had all the effect that was to be expected on the mother's jealous nature.

As the dates of these letters are designedly suppressed, I cannot say how long Miss Boyce was engaged in this thankless office. It had its limits. The more she became at home, the nearer the relation of the pupils to the teacher, the more evident their progress, and the more complete the father's satisfaction, the worse it was for the mother, who found herself an encumbrance and a supernumerary. Indeed she was now out of count altogether, nobody, on mere sufferance, compelled to bear, and incapable of any graceful manner of endurance. It became a succession of long agonies. 'This poor woman, whose temper drives everybody away from her, has been sulking for more than a week. Nobody has heard the sound of her voice.' But there had been planned a visit to a farm, and all set to work to sooth her up for the occasion. 'We succeeded,' says the writer of these letters, 'in laying the demon to rest for a while, and the day passed off smoothly, indeed pleasantly to me, for I was out of her sight for the greatest part of the time.' Miss Boyce communicated her troubles to a neighbouring lady, and reports the reply. 'Oh, don't let that disturb you. She never talks, she has nothing to say, she feels nothing, she thinks of nothing, she is weighed down by her own stupidity.'

But her silence is open to another construction. She had something to say; she did feel; she had her

thoughts, and her burden too, but she could not form or express them, nor was there any one to whom she could confide them.

In a subsequent letter, as if apologising to her future husband for the nonsense she had been talking, Miss Boyce says :—

I have uniformly persevered in my own line of conduct. I have never noticed any of her rudeness. When alone with her I have laboured (I am sure the labour of the treadwheel was nothing to it) to preserve that sort of complacent behaviour or civility due from one human being to another, and I have contrived to keep up some sort of talk, and I really began to think myself amazingly clever in thus adapting myself to the lowest capacity. Yes, it is no conceit on my part to say so, for I certainly never saw any one before so low in the scale of intellect, though she was educated by Hannah More.

The lady was from home for a week, and Miss Boyce spontaneously watered her plants, and fed her birds, and took care of everything. The lady came back worse than ever.

'I am entirely at a loss to know the cause,' says Miss Boyce to her future husband, 'except that the youngest child the other day said, "What have you done naughty to mamma? She can't bear you, she says; I heard her tell papa so; and he said you were good; and mamma said you were not, for you were as deceitful and as proud as you were high." 'Tis very well that I am not six feet, if that is to be the measure of my iniquity; but the child said still more, that "mamma said I talked so fine, and pretended to be better than anybody else."'

By-and-by Miss Boyce reports :—

She has been sulking with her husband for the last fortnight; but to-day she is on speaking terms with him. Poor man! the other day a person was spoken of who was going to marry a man of different principles from her own: 'Tell her from me,' said he, 'that she is going to do a thing which she

will repent of every day, ay, every hour, of her life ; tell her,' he added, in all the bitterness of a wounded spirit, 'that one who has proved the misery, and whose life is wearing away with it, sends her the caution.'

The 'person' in question was either to break off the engagement, or fulfil it with this gentleman's denunciation of utter misery sounding in her ear.

Miss Boyce was a little surprised, but does not appear to have perceived the wickedness, the brutality of such a speech. On the day on which she recorded this in a letter to her intended, she says :—

The wretched woman seems determined to force me to resign my situation. Her behaviour was so rude to-day at dinner that her husband lost his temper, and asked her in a stern voice if she was not ashamed of herself.

Miss Boyce gave one of her pupils a hint as to the management of a bone on her plate, whereupon the mother told the child to go on doing as she had been doing, and not to follow the governess's nice ways. The father instantly came to the rescue of the governess, and rated his wife soundly. 'She is enough to ruin a host of children,' says Miss Boyce.

It may be asked why she did not leave the house at once, after any one of these explosions. But she was not bound to leave at a day's notice, nor was she in a condition to do so, with her mother dependent on her.

People who are utterly miserable, if we are to believe them, and who persevere in what is intensely disagreeable, deserve more consideration than they who are evidently pleasing themselves. Miss Boyce's daily experience, she says, reminded her of the sen-

tence passed on the children of Israel: 'And thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind; and thou shalt fear day and night; in the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning!'

It is scarcely fair, I must admit, to quote the most salient points of these letters, when their charm is their affectionate and playful *abandon*. Miss Boyce had correspondents who taxed her time and strength. 'Any scribble will do for you,' she says to Mr. Wayland, and writes to him in pure idleness. Mr. Wayland is confiding too. He expresses his disappointment in his ministerial exertions, as what honest clergyman will not? Freedom of speech, however, has its bounds even between lovers. Mr. Wayland lets out in an unguarded moment that he has always 'a corner in his heart for a sentimental libertine.' I know not whom he was referring to, or whether to any one in particular, but it so happened that he incurred some scandal by bestowing upon just such a character needless social attention when he ought to have confined himself to pastoral discipline. Miss Boyce replies sharply that she had better then be off, and leave room for one Mr. Wayland might feel more to his taste. However, it proved a case of *amantium iræ*.

Such outpourings are very apt to lose an epistolary or conversational character. The writer is a fountain, and no more, caring not even how or whither the stream is conducted. It is possible, barely possible, that Miss Boyce, talking all day to

children far below her level of intellect, to a man whom she could not regard as her equal, and to a woman who hated her on account of her superiority, might come to the conclusion that nobody cared to hear her talk. If so she might be honest when she writes as follows :—

I cannot help smiling when, in trying to give me confidence, you expatiate on my power of pleasing everybody when I talk! So others of my friends have said and sung ; and I have always laughed in my sleeve and made no attempt to undeceive them, for I have no objection to your, or their, fancying such things. But I know myself ; I know that there is not one man in five hundred who would give one farthing to hear me talk, and I am more than even with them on that score.

As a fact, everybody liked to hear her talk, till it came to some point of absolute divergence ; and any one with common tact could steer clear of such rocks and shoals ahead.

Matters got so bad, indeed the intestine war in the household was so flagrant, that the father never found himself alone with the governess but he was in an agony of terror, fearing that she would take the opportunity to give notice. The neighbours thought that imminent, and, one after another, urged Miss Boyce to stay. The question always was whether she was to bear it three months, or more than three months. But there is an end of all things, and even this complication ended in a general explosion.

I cannot appraise the motives which led to the publication of such a tragedy of real life ; but as I must admit it to have been providentially overruled, I may exercise my own judgment as to its moral. Here was this poor woman an object of compassion,

if there ever was one; stricken from her infancy, from her very birth perhaps, with disorders worse than physical, and harder to be healed. She may have been just what the material philosophers love to imagine, the creature of natural law, as forces casually prevailed about her. She may have been what the greater number, or the nearest, or the strongest, of her progenitors had been. The follies and stupidities of those who had the care of her may have been such as to make matters continually worse. My own impressions of Hannah More do not incline me to credit her with a good influence on young minds. I remember, even in my boyhood, thinking her 'Christian Morals' more likely to do harm than to do good.

As the poor lady before us married late, it may not be fair to expect much from the husband; but, with all his smooth face and bland composure, it is evident he was a solemn, sour, and stupid man, idiotically self-conceited and narrow-minded, and worse in his way than his wife was in hers. I scarcely know a place low enough in creation for a man who could deny his wife the little recreations which are necessary to many natures, and which to most natures are the alternative of sleeping in easy chairs, of silence, that is, the silence of dumb animals, or of wearisome reiterations. This gentleman thought himself in the right and his wife in the wrong; and accordingly thought himself bound to present to her his hardest and sharpest edges and corners, always cutting into her very soul. The Pharisees of old did that to the outer world; this man to the wife of his

bosom, whom he had sworn to love, comfort, and honour.

The only excuse I can frame for him is his evident, but rather pompous imbecility. It is of no use to ask what he ought to have done. He could not do it. He hadn't it in him. If his wife was the creature of evolution and circumstance, so was he. Being what they were, they couldn't help themselves.

But what am I to say to the lady of uncómmon genius, and still greater power of expression, who was sought out and interposed between these jarring elements, and whose business it was to turn to one another all the hearts of this distracted household? So far as I can see she brought nothing really new into that little world. She was no revelation. They were all following natural law to its inevitable doom, and I cannot discover that she did otherwise, or attempted it, or dreamt of it. They were all doing what they severally liked; and she did what she liked. She agreed with the husband and liked him. She hated, despised, and loathed the wife. She seemed to think that not only was she justified in doing so, but that it was a conclusive proof of her own superior goodness. As she denied to the poor woman any claim to be regarded as a Christian at all, she saw no occasion for that pity and courtesy due from Christians to inferiors, whatever their sorrows or their shortcomings.

So I must say of her as I have found myself saying of many better known to fame—Very clever, very interesting; but no more spiritually minded,

—with no more of the mind of Christ—than the world generally. Christian work is mediatorial, condescending, healing, soothing, and making whole. Mrs. Wayland had not the gift or the conception of this work. She had theories and words, those of a school; she could enunciate, and even declaim. But it was the song of a bird, the same invariable strain, without application to character, condition, and circumstance. So these unhappy people she left as she found them, except, maybe, imparting something of her natural gifts to young and still tender minds. If I am asked how 'Dependence' ever came to be published, I answer that it was to show how a very clever woman, and I suppose I must add a very clever man, could fail in the special work of the Christian ministry.

CHAPTER LXXII.

DEPENDENCE IN THE PARISH.

IN effect, the writer of these letters was doomed—indeed, she doomed herself—to be always dependent. Bassingham, when she came to it, had been for some years entirely under the spiritual dominion of a very able and determined woman, the Wesleyan shopkeeper, who never allowed the Waylands to wrest from her an inch of her authority, or to share her throne. She ruled the schools, the classes, and even the church, for it was only by her leave that

any one ever entered it. Against this rock Mrs. Wayland talked, and wrote, and contrived in vain. If she ever availed herself of permission to enter the school, it was to find herself snubbed by the youngest and pertest teacher in it. Wherever two or three were gathered together, she had to be the lowest of the listeners. She really was from first to last outside the village world—an interloper, an intruder, upon the merest sufferance, under continual espionage, ever liable to be called to account. She was herself as Low Church as could be; but Low Church or High Church mattered not there—the 'Connexion' was everything, and the 'Conference' the Apostolic College.

The village church, hardly up to the mark as a building, and rather dreary, was drearier still in its services. Mr. Wayland was perhaps too much of a scholar and of a dilettante to have his heart entirely in the work. His sermons were too well written; the sentences too well rounded. He fenced and foiled rather than pierced to the quick. His wife now and then wrote a sermon for him, and the new hand was sure to betray itself in an unusual pungency, and in expressions easily capable of a personal application. I must say that, looking at the congregation as it was, and the preacher as he was, it did sometimes just occur to me that these poor people might possibly fare better at the chapel than at the church.

As I cannot recall any similar case of Wesleyan ascendency, I must regard this as exceptional, and as due, in a great measure, to the non-residence of

the incumbent, and to the parish being left in the care of a curate, with less than a quarter of the pay, and less than that of the authority. Such a curate cannot exercise hospitality to his poor parishioners, and must take pupils, to the consumption of much time and strength. But it is worth while to note the working of one of the chief features of the Wesleyan constitution. Wesley's life warfare was with the clerical autocracy. Everywhere he found a man ready, and, indeed, fairly able, to fight the world in defence of his own personal position. The village parson could snap his fingers at his own parishioners, at bishops and archdeacons, at Parliament, at spiritual courts, and in those days at newspapers. Nobody could make him do what he was bound to do; nobody could prevent him from doing what he chose to do. So as he made a gallant fight to do what he liked with his own, he was supported by the greater part of the clergy, and of the world. It was inevitable, under such circumstances, that scandals everywhere cropped up, especially the worst of all scandals, because the least demonstrative—absolute neglect of duty.

Against ten thousand local tyrannies, should they chance to show themselves in his own system, John Wesley provided local self-government, and the Conference—at once a legislative and executive body. He also provided the stringent and efficacious provision of frequent change of place in the ministry. The Wesleyan minister is like an officer in the British army or navy, or under the Foreign Office, or in colonial service, stationed where he is for a very brief

term, without time to form a party, or a footing and surrounding of his own.

But what follows as to the locality, the chapel, and its congregation? If there be any one on the spot fond of power, and qualified for it, such a state of things offers a great opportunity. Most people are so constituted as to gather round somebody. If they are not allowed to twist round one stick they will twist round another. If they cannot twist to the right, they will twist to the left, so as they twist round something, some way or other. John Wesley's own career was a standing encouragement to personal ambition, rather than a standing reproof; and if he could establish a sovereignty over a whole Church, extending far beyond these realms, it can be no wonder that many a man or woman, of less power and opportunity, has succeeded in the part of a village autocrat.

It came, of course, to Wayland himself regarding his church and his parish as a rather secondary affair. He had done his best, and failed. He had nothing else to offer or to do, but what the Church offered and did; and that the people would not accept or do.

But it positively stood in the way of both Mr. and Mrs. Wayland that they could talk so much and so well. Empire and ascendency are won and maintained more by silence than by talk. I remember hearing a banker's wife from Boston, U.S., after denouncing the Southerners very bitterly for some time, suddenly pulling up: 'One thing she did admire in the Southern ladies, and that was the way in which they managed their households'—of course,

all of them slaves. 'They never scolded, or spoke a word; they did but wave a hand, or give a look, and they were instantly obeyed.'

The Waylands had to suffer continual failure, defeat, and humiliation. I have ever ascribed it to deficiencies of character in both these very remarkable persons. I have often been reminded of the Bassingham curate and his wife, when I have seen or heard of those who with pencil or pen can caricature anybody that comes under their eye, but who, in effect, are trampled upon or outmanœuvred by those who can handle neither pencil nor pen. In this case the provocation which would have stung or stirred less subtle natures into vigorous action, only kindled a flare of idle words. But, undoubtedly, there was also an element of inevitable weakness in the opinions of both the curate and his wife. They neither had such an entire confidence in the Church of England, or in their own opinions, as to be able to demand the least submission, or even common deference, as of right. They thought and felt. So, too, did the people about them. Yet they could not say, or even quite feel, that they were right, and the others wrong.

To take this higher ground was hazardous, perhaps unjustifiable. Nor was it quite necessary. Another course was easier, pleasanter, and, to a certain extent, effectual. This was to describe in fitting form and hue the passing scene, and the characters daily reappearing in it. Both the gentleman and the lady could talk and write as few can do. What more did they want? Why leave the

field in which they were always victorious for another in which they had no confidence—nay, in which, possibly, they were doomed to defeat. It is the temptation of those clergymen who live much with other clergymen and other educated people, with fine ladies and gentlemen, with scholars and wits. They always have their revenge in society; but so far as concerns the souls they are charged with, it is always fighting with the air.

Of course, between people good at heart and serious there came to be a certain *modus vivendi* —and even more, for there was actual co-operation. Mrs. Wayland would never have endured to do nothing, even if she had to be less than her right in order to do something. If she had to bear much, she relieved herself in very amusing letters, which I saw only occasionally, at the time, and long ago. But a letter from Mrs. Wayland was always a treat. I remember her having had to accompany two Wesleyans of her sex to a sick bed. The more important Wesleyan lady took the lead at the head of the bed. She was a large heavy woman, but wanted stability on her knees. Through some awkwardness, she fell sideways, knocking over the other two, and all three were sprawling on the floor, like the bricks a child puts endways in a row and then tilts over.

Mrs. Wayland had her opportunities, and thereby her victories. In one of her letters she described herself as sitting up alone a whole night with a poor woman in a fever, when the Wesleyans would not venture near her: Wesleyan zeal took a different direction. In another letter Mrs. Wayland described

the last hours—last scene it could not be called—of a poor man dying in the village workhouse, his wife sitting up with him. The matron in charge of the workhouse was a Wesleyan. She would not allow the dying man and his watcher a candle. In vain did the wife entreat for one, that she might see life or death in her husband's face, and get what he wanted. She could get nothing. She only knew by the lower tones, and longer intervals, that he was slowly passing away, as he did before morn. When morn came the matron took everything belonging to the man as her perquisite, and would not allow the smallest article to the widow, though she begged and prayed for some long-known trifles. Mrs. Wayland related all this to the female head of the Wesleyan community, who disposed of everything with the reply, 'She makes a good experience at our meetings.'

The despotism to which this couple had to render a life-long submission had none of the mitigations by which even despotisms are partially justified or redeemed. There was nothing grand, or romantic, or even ancient about it. When the couple went to Bassingham there must have been many thereabouts who had seen and heard John Wesley. The exemplar was fresh, still living in the memory, and still reflected in the lives of these very people, who were much what Wesley had been before them.

The little I had to do with the people seemed to bring out that they were rather absorbed in their own interests and their own class. There certainly was no spare civility, and hardly enough common humanity.

In walking across a long field close to the village I found myself briskly pursued by a bull. I scrambled over the nearest fence, the bull after me. We had a race through the next field, when I won, and got over another fence. The owner of the bull was soon at me with some very rough language for teaching the animal to break fences.

I wish the good folks who think every human mind ready to ignite at the touch of flame, and to develop to new faculties and unknown dimensions, had a ten years' experience in a remote rural parish, especially where rusticity has acquired a religious sanction and gloss. Formed in lines of his own, the rustic labourer, farmer, shopkeeper, or what not, knows nothing, learns nothing, sees nothing, hears nothing that he has not known, seen, or heard long ago. The United States may be supposed a place where even an old and experienced eye might enjoy the sensation of novelty. A Bassingham woman went there, and after, I think, two years came back. Mrs. Wayland called, in hope to pick up something new. 'Well, ma'am,' the woman said, 'I can't say as I see'd anything particular.' No doubt she said as she felt.

But I will take the opportunity to offer a suggestion to my clerical brothers cast away in the dark and dead corners of this land. It first occurred to myself when too late to be followed up. A soldier had been discharged after twenty years' service, including the Indian Mutiny. I had wished for a talk with him, and I got it at last; but he was outside my parish, though a frequent visitor in it, and was now going farther away. After eliciting a few bits from

him, I asked why he did not give his experiences to the village—that is, my own—and just tell them what he had gone through. 'My people,' I said, 'know nothing of India, or of war, or of anything indeed out of the parish.' Whereupon he said that he had once tried to give an account of some Indian affair to a small throng in my village, but very soon a fellow cried out, 'Thou *beest* a loiar,' whereupon they all burst into laughter, and he had not the courage to begin again. Whether this would be likely to occur often I know not, but I am quite sure that these poor fellows, who have deserved so well from their country, and can deserve so much more, have little capacity for telling their own stories, and still less encouragement to make the attempt. They want interviewing They want coaching, as the most truthful witnesses have to be coached by honest lawyers. They have to be treated as a reporter treats a clumsy and unmethodical informant, who does not know whether to begin at the beginning, middle, or end.

One digression more. A young middy presented himself at a newspaper office with a dreadful story to tell. He was one of the few survivors of the 'Amazon,' burnt at sea. On arriving in town, he had gone at once to the shipowner, as directed at the port where he landed. The gentleman was out dining. The middy went to the house, had him called out, and told his story. 'Now, my lad,' the gentleman said, 'time 's precious. I cannot hear your story, and you can hardly tell it. Get into a hansom, and tell the driver to take you to such an office,' naming it. The editor, like the shipowner, had to pass him on

'Take him to such a room,' he said, 'and send —— to him, to get out of him what he has to say.' The result was a full, clear, and circumstantial narrative, the accuracy of which was never impeached, and which is, I believe, the history of the 'Amazon.'

Now there are few clergymen without an immense advantage, in exposition as well as information, over most of the people about them. My suggestion is that they extract from persons with any unusual experiences what they have to tell, put it in form, and so enable the persons themselves to tell their own stories; or do it for them, in their presence, and with their occasional aid.

From this digression I must return to the simply parochial or pastoral question. The relation of a parochial clergyman with his people is confidential and domestic. He breaks that confidence and is a telltale when he makes good stories of his parochial experience at the expense of people who have not the opportunity or the power to reply. In this case the parish, from first to last, would not give its confidence, and never allowed Mr. and Mrs. Wayland a chance for winning it. The people had placed themselves under a spiritual guidance of their own selection and their own organisation, and would have none that the Church could offer them. So it was no wonder that this very clever and very humorous couple had an inexhaustible fund of good stories about their parishioners. They were ready to do justice, but as they could not have the pleasure of a spiritual success, they held themselves at liberty to amuse themselves and their friends. Yet now that I have forgotten

these good stories, I ask involuntarily what good they could ever do.

One incident I remember—not a good story, nor telling particularly against the Wesleyans, nor against Lincolnshire, but which yet will surprise most people conversant only with town life. A well-behaved and good-tempered Bassingham girl of thirteen went to service at a farm, where, besides much other work, she had the charge of a very fractious child. She poisoned the child, was tried at Lincoln, convicted, and sent to gaol for a twelvemonth. Some people will ask where the girl could go, or how could she get her living, after committing so horrid a crime. She went home, and immediately got a place in her own village where there were several children to look after. In rural districts there is an immense amount of condonation for the first offence. I believe it to be the true account of many surprising verdicts. Perhaps, too, farmers take into account the loss to the public in shutting up for years a strong lad or lass just when their services are most available.

But I once heard all the details of a still more extraordinary instance. An East Anglian rector, who had been master of a well-known school in the west of England, was still a bachelor. His housekeeper committed child-murder, and went to gaol for a twelvemonth. When she came out her master wished to take her back into his service, and would have done so but for the remonstrances of his clerical neighbours, who very properly insisted on the ugly look of such a step, however charitable.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

PUPILS, CHILDREN, AND NEIGHBOURS.

HAPPILY for Wayland, and perhaps for the parish too, he had another work, and in it a line of his own. Mrs. Wayland was, I should think, essential to it, and did her part in it admirably. In that lonely, dull, and not very salubrious place, among fens and ditches, Wayland had a succession of pupils in whom he was as fortunate as they were fortunate in him. Most of the names have passed away from me. Among those I remember were Stewart, Kingscote, Peyton, Danvers Clarke, whom I have mentioned as ringing Oriel College bell from my rooms; Bogue, who married one of Froude's sisters; Scott, a brother of Stonehewer Scott; Reynardson, Hoare, Price, and, for a few months, Edward Golightly.

The first of these, nephew of the Lord Castlereagh, and himself succeeding to the marquisate, came to the Waylands immediately after their marriage, and on one occasion accompanied them on a visit to us at Derby. Mr. Wayland had written about a proposed visit. It was likely to be frustrated by the continued sitting of the Congress at Aix-la-Chapelle, which would detain Lord Castlereagh several weeks longer, unless indeed the Queen's death should make a difference. Stewart had nowhere else to go but his lordship's. All difficulties, however, were got over, and on December 3, 1818, Mr. Wayland writes:—

MY DEAR SIR,—We intend leaving this place on Monday

morning, and hope to be with you about six or seven o'clock the same evening. We are sorry that we must bring Mr. Stewart, because we do not like to intrude upon you with such a party as grandmamma, papa, mamma, baby, and pupil. But if you find us very intolerable you must not ask us again. . . . I have got my duty done for two Sundays only. . . . Make yourself quite easy about Mr. Stewart. You would never find him out to be a young man of high connections but by his total want of all pretensions. Your housemaid need not be alarmed at the baby, for Mrs. Boyce [Mrs. Wayland's mother] *will* do everything for it, and is only in a fright for fear she should not be allowed to be always with it in the nursery or bedroom, or wherever you chance to send it.

This most useful and convenient mother-in-law I saw and I remember, but I cannot remember that she was ever separated from the baby, or that she made any appearance downstairs except with the baby in her arms.

But I am told that Mrs. Wayland's mother never did take any position but that of an old confidential servant, and was quite out of her place in the social circle. It must have been her own wish; but one may see in it some explanation of her daughter's deficiencies—that is, of her singular inability to hold her own in her appointed sphere as a parish clergyman's wife, and her equal inability to make the best of her former 'dependent' positions. She had never known at home that pattern of female authority which an English lady is expected to present to the various kinds and classes of people about her.

The tutor and his wife always held their own at the table and in the drawing-room by their great superiority in conversational power. They could at once command the respect and win the affection of

their pupils. The latter were a new and welcome element in the neighbourhood. They had their humours and nonsense, but were always well in hand.

One night the Waylands were alarmed by the report of a gun upstairs. The pupils had been much disturbed by the village cats. So they caught a quantity of small fish, laid a train across the green before the house, and so drew the enemy near enough to make a massacre of them from the window.

I think it was Peyton who had down a scarlet coat fresh from the tailor. He had to take the shine out of it before making an appearance in the field, and this he did by wearing it indoors. He was sitting with his tutor in the drawing-room when a carriage drove to the door, and before he could escape several neighbours were in upon them. Peyton jumped behind a screen, hoping the call would be short. The people stayed an hour or two, and every minute of it the position became more uncomfortable, and even disgraceful in the probable case of a discovery.

I got myself and young Hoare into real disgrace. On a bright Sunday, after lunch, I invited him to take a short walk. In twenty minutes we arrived at the Fen, upon which the sun shone rather deceptively. It looked only a few hundred yards across. First there was a narrow causeway, then stepping-stones, then irregular boggy ground, out of which we were glad to emerge, by no means dryshod. But we had had a mile of this, and even if we had hastened back by the same route we should not have been in time for the afternoon service. So we rounded the Fen. Very black looks indeed had we when we presented

ourselves at the parsonage, I of course getting the worst of it.

Remote as the region was, perhaps on that very account there were new-comers. Properties were thrown on the market, and found purchasers who believed themselves discoverers, settlers, and founders. These were men of letters as well as men of money, and one name standing high in art and science was added in time to the social circle. They made plantations, laid out drives, and tried feats of agricultural chemistry in the midst of incredulous and scoffing farmers. It was a time when agriculturists had little hope or trust except in a great war, which they had come to think a necessary condition of British prosperity.

It was some one already in the neighbourhood who had a miniature forest, with wild animals, a lake, an island, a commodious planter's log-house approached by a bridge, and Indian curiosities. He invited the most fastidious dresser in the neighbourhood to come and see his settlement in the 'backwoods.' The bridge was a drawbridge ingeniously constructed, and he dropped his friend into the dirty pool below. 'Well. It's very sad, but I think I can find change for you. Happily there's nobody here to see you in a strange guise.' So he dressed his friend in the gardener's third best suit, with the addition of moccasins and an Indian mantle. 'Come to the fire and warm yourself,' he said, leading his friend into the principal room, where he found himself the centre of a large and admiring circle.

Wayland's curate-in-charge at Kirton was, I think,

a 'ten-year man,' and I must not suppose Cambridge quite responsible for him. But as half a century before this there had been a well-educated man there, the master of the Grammar School, Kirton must have become sensible of a decline in its literature. The poor man, who did his duty fairly, and was popular, so I was told, sent his vicar monthly reports. They were on foolscap, in large round-hand, in lines running a couple of inches out of the horizontal, without any capitals, and with even the first person singular pronoun represented by a small dotted letter. The style was quite as childish as the handwriting.

But in those days there was found, I think more frequently than now, a sort of survival of the past in an inoffensive address, civil manners, and a respectable delivery, combined with an utter want of literary education. Wayland appeared to think there was nothing to be ashamed of in having such a curate, for he more than shared the general amusement at the exhibition of these letters. The Kirton curate paid the Waylands a visit at Bassingham, and preached. 'Did you notice, ma'am, where I went off?' he asked Mrs. Wayland after the service—that is, where he had passed into extempore.

But if anything can be justified by many examples, the choice of this rough-and-ready Kirton curate might be. It is frequently found that a well-intentioned patron has presented a man of letters, and presumably with a conscience, to an important and populous parish. The man of letters soon finds that, if he is to go about talking to his poor and scattered flock, he must give up writing little books, or

contributing to magazines, or spinning theories, or composing sonnets. So he looks out for a man as unlike himself as possible, and as like a horse as a man can be. He then comforts himself with the persuasion that his 'horse' is doing the pastoral work of his parish, while he is discharging loftier functions in his study, or a thousand miles off, as may be. I feel sure that there must have been some people in so large a place as Kirton a little above the level of their vicar's almost savage substitute.

I used to imagine the stronghold of Methodism the Waylands found at Bassingham to have been one of John Wesley's earliest foundations; but I do not find the name in a documentary history of the Methodists up to 1812. It must, however, be remembered that some of the county families of Lincolnshire were early and energetic supporters of Methodism. They utterly despaired of any good likely to come of the Church of England, which till a recent date showed worse in that county than anywhere else in the world, with the exception, if exception, of Ireland.

At one of my visits, Horace Wayland, a child in his second year, was the hope and joy of the house. He promised well, but his head was rather too large, and his forehead too beetling. He was ill one night; there was running up and down stairs, peremptory orders given, messages sent to and fro. The child had had a fit. Some one said that one of his eyes had a twist. I feared the worst. In the morning he was gone, and we visitors were sadly in the way. Wayland himself, a good scholar, with high aspirations,

condemned to solitude, drudgery, and ungenial surroundings, had pined for some one bearing his name, to emerge better from the rocks and shoals that had marred his own course. This hope was now blasted.

I have often had to notice how little family traditions are to be depended on. A grown-up granddaughter of Mr. Wayland never knew he had had a son till she read it in my former Reminiscences. Yet what event more serious or fuller of consequences than the death of an only son?

Mr. Wayland's daughters left him no reason to complain of his lot. The one I knew most of was in some respects most noticeable. This was Sophy. Her arrival at Grayingham was duly reported to Derby by the somewhat bewildered father in a letter dated February 12, 1818. 'I can scarcely yet feel that I am a father. I can only remember that I am a husband, and that the cherished being who suffered for me and my child is mercifully safe.' During a prolonged visit to Derby, Sophy and I became great friends. Though good-looking, she was stiff and awkward. We had dancing lessons, and though the parents objected to balls, on principle, they thought a few lessons with us might cure this awkwardness. The poor child, seven or eight, made much more play with her fingers than with her toes, stretching her arms here and there in a most fantastic fashion. She read much, and as she grew she became even more reserved and difficult of access. Her parents had no reason, however, to suspect her temper.

They drove out once to make an afternoon call, leaving Sophy at home, and I suppose also in sole

charge. On their return home they found every flower in their very pretty garden rooted up, and the garden a wilderness. My friend Sophy met them with unabashed brow, and admitted at once that she had done it. She could give no reason, indeed there could be none, for she had no quarrel, and she had not expected or wished to be taken out for this drive. She could not be brought to say that what she had done was wrong. She knew that her mother was passionately fond of flowers. This indeed had to do with the mother's singular ideas of dress, for she could not see a beautiful colour or a pretty form without wishing to envelop herself in it. Sophy could not but conclude that her mother would be astonished and grieved. Yet she was obstinately indifferent.

Not long after she began to decline, and after a long illness she died. In this stage she showed spontaneously an increasing tenderness of feeling and perception, which amply redeemed the previous blank. I cannot remember in what part of this change it was that upon being taken to a Methodist meeting she went into a fit of enthusiasm. After her death her mother published a very interesting record of her conversion and of her conversation. To me they were as great a surprise as the above singular incident. That, however, remains unexplained, and so far the story is only one more testimony to the wondrous power of the one Holy Name. After her death the parents, as if to keep up the memory, christened another babe Sophia, whom I think I have heard confounded with my young friend.

The sequel showed that the disease was rather in the head than in the heart, and that there was, as they say, 'a screw loose' in the system. This was some old idea, hereditary, congenital, innate, or what not, coming out, as old characteristics are seen in new faces and new careers. But destruction is a universal idea, or all but universal. Almost everybody wants to pull down, to sweep away, to clear the ground, to make a *rasa tabula* for the platform of some hobby or some novelty. Hundreds of times have I heard good, kind, and sensible people descanting on the necessity and urgency of this preparatory process. Clear away the existing gentry, clergy, public functionaries, schoolmasters, tutors, professors, anything whatever of an institutional and traditional character. The Bible contains much destruction, frequently, too, in its final aspect rather than as a preparatory or intermediate stage. I think the phrenologists speak of a 'bump' of destructiveness. Of course none of these ideas would fully explain the extraordinary freak I have described above; but it is the very nature of insanity to show itself in initial, inceptive, and incomplete actions. The insane are frequently destructive without reason, without passion, without even reasonable consequence. They will tear their clothes, pick straws to pieces, and injure not only the unprovoking, but even themselves. I suppose we all have some reason to beware, if not of downright insanity, yet of a want of self-control, too likely to arise from indiscriminately accepting stray thoughts, and harbouring them till they become fixed ideas.

I paid several visits to Bassingham, passing

through Newark. As I was looking at the grand ruins of the Castle, a schoolmaster sallied forth, and took me at a rapid pace along the dizzy path at the top of the walls, showing me the dark hole in which King John was said to have died. In all the shop-windows were bills in large letters inviting people to bid for the duke's vacant farms, at a stated day and hour, in the nave of the parish church, one of the largest and handsomest in the kingdom.

I was myself very much younger than the Bassingham couple, hardly yet ten when they came to us on their wedding trip, when I suppose they would be both not far from thirty. So I was long *in statu pupillari* in their eyes. They were much interested in me when I was at Charterhouse; they respected me when I was at college; and mixed a little awe with that respect when I became Fellow. We had many pleasant conversations, in which we were mutually agreeable; but I also had a good deal of sparring with the lady. We were both disposed to criticise, though from very different standing-points. But I have no doubt I often deserved what she said, or what she felt.

One occasion I cannot help associating with her, because she gave me to understand that I had disappointed her very much—why, I cannot quite say. Derby Infirmary wanted money, and this was to be raised by a fancy ball, opening its doors as wide as possible. On the plea of charity, town and county—all that came with money in their hands—were to be welcome. Mrs. Wayland did not like balls of any kind, least of all one that had not even the pretence

of being confined to a select circle. She expected that I should make a protest against it. I had expressed a dislike of it, but she wanted more.

I went. All our people went. All the town went. All the county went. It was a great crowd,, with a sprinkling of national costumes, historic figures, borrowed uniforms, and theatrical suits. One stalwart friend of mine sent to London for a suit of armour, and there came down a suit in brass that had evidently figured in a Lord Mayor's procession. I spent an hour trying in vain to fit it to a figure as long and as thin as that of the knight with a rueful countenance. Happily he had to give up that. There was little room for dancing at the ball, and it was confined to the county people, who had laid their plans beforehand. The old ladies played at whist in the wings.

About four, when daylight was forcing its way into the room, there was a confusion at the lower end, growing into a disturbance. The tones of anger, indignation, expostulation, and denunciation became louder and louder, and the stewards had been invoked, as it appeared, in vain. The market-place was chuck-full of carriages ; it was impossible to bring one of them up to the entrance, and impossible for the one at the entrance to move away. A crowd of ladies in their wraps were in the passages, and had been there an hour or more. About five I went into the market-place, and heard an animated conversation between a hundred coachmen. Amongst them, moving about everywhere, and making the air ring with the strongest language permitted to an English

gentleman, was a noble figure, evidently Sir Walter Raleigh, with or without his head, as people might choose to say, but as the pictures give him. Sir Roger Gresley was engaged in the hopeless task of giving order and motion to this little chaos. I believe the result was that the greater part of the company had to walk home, or to their hotels, just as they were.

In genius, in force of character, in strength of convictions, in consistency, Mrs. Wayland had the advantage of her husband. Yet by one very good test he had a great advantage over her. Her little volume of Tales, written for the American nephew, betrays not only uncharitableness, but even unhappiness. Mr. Wayland was cheerful and content to the last. Comparatively alone, with the world against him, day-dreams long faded away, with an impracticable parish, crippled, crooked, and hardly able to raise his eyes from the ground, he was as happy as he had been forty years before, when hope was young and the world was smiling upon him. I cannot remember whether it was he or some one else who related that a gentleman riding into Bassingham one day, and wishing to see the church, met a little walking scarecrow, in threadbare clothes that once had been black. 'Are you the clerk?' he asked. The figure with difficulty, but with a merry smile, turned up its eye sideways, and answered, 'No; I'm the parson.'

CHAPTER LXXIV.

ST. WERBURGH'S WORKHOUSE.

BY the time we had been at Derby twenty years our family had taken a prominent part in four controversies greatly disturbing the equanimity of the old town. My father led the way in the two first, and I in the two last. Even at the first the town was exclaiming, 'This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge.' That first controversy was the treatment of the poor.

I must begin with confessing that I have all my life been grossly inconsistent in this matter. Mercy and righteousness must meet, but it is not I that have conciliated them. Both in word and in deed I have taken one side or the other, as the impulse or the occasion may have been. From infancy I have sided with the scolded servant, the punished child, the miserable beggar, the petty offender, the discarded *employé*, the out-voted minister, the dethroned monarch—all, so long as they remained in their childish or feminine forms of base submission or feeble remonstrance. The instant they showed a manly front and resolved to make every effort to recover their rights, then I instinctively stood on my defence against the disturbers of the world's peace.

How I ever came by such a line of feeling I know not, for I never had the feeding of pigs, ducks, or chickens. When it came to theories and to controversies I was just, and could be even resentful. This

inconsistency appears in the very face of the world, and on the surface of Scripture throughout, till we recognise that there are two sides to the question, and that it is a problem which heart and mind are to work out together. All through the Bible the poor are brought before us as objects at once of compassion and of discipline.

The parish workhouse is a thing of the past. Crabbe's picture—wonderful as it is, true as it is—must not be accepted as quite normal. What he describes is such a workhouse as I found at Buckland, in such a parish as Buckland. There, as at Moreton Pinckney, and most midland villages, all the labourers were paupers, and the whole parish one poorhouse. But even in that dead level of pauperism there were exceptional cases. The utterly crippled, the blind, the idiotic, the disagreeable—in a word, they that had no friends to put up with them—were huddled together at Buckland in a vile hole called the Workhouse.

The workhouses in town were pretty, interesting buildings, recalling the mediæval priory, and now recalled in turn by the bright, fantastic-looking almshouses that court the eye of the railway passenger as soon as he has got a few miles out of town. They were low buildings, parlours below, bedrooms above, round a court, and looking very quiet indeed. The churchyard at Gainsborough was flanked by such a workhouse on one side, and the vicarage on the other—all three now disused. The workhouse of St. Werburgh's, in the best part of the Friargate, was sufficiently like Gainsborough to take me back

there. I used to experience a rather pleasant sensation as I passed the ever open entrance of the workhouse, and saw people quite at large, and with nothing particular to do, going in and out, or not seeming to have decided whether they should go in or go out. They looked quite happy, on good terms with themselves and the world, and they were generally women, neither old nor ill-looking. To these appearances I had never once applied my critical powers, any more than at that time I had to the Garden of Eden.

In the year 1826, my second year at Oxford, the parish made my father Overseer of the Poor. When I heard of it I think I was a little disgusted, and thought my father had better have let it alone. He had half such a thought himself, but I believe had no choice; and once in for it he felt he must do his duty.

I now see, perhaps better than I saw then, that my father, in spite of the increasing cares of a large family and of an extensive business, might naturally be craving for some share in the affairs of the town. He, his father, and his grandfather had been not only of and in Gainsborough, but also part of it, and a very important part. In 1826, after being eleven years at Derby, my father and our family had absolutely nothing to do with the public affairs of the town. Outside a small circle of acquaintance he was a stranger in the town. His political creed was Toryism, mitigated by personal friendships, and a great hatred of all abuses. The Liberals had it all their own way in the town, or did as people generally do when they have it all their own way. They

jobbed everything for their party and their friends. What they did perhaps was not so bad as what they left undone, for there was no abuse or neglect they did not tolerate so long as they did not see their own particular advantage in trying to set it right.

It was charity in my father's case, not economy, that led the way. He had always been most kind and forbearing with his own workpeople, employing them to the last at such work as he could find within their powers. He now found, however, that at Derby it was an ordinary thing for an employer to get his friends to go with him to a vestry, and back an application for outdoor relief—that is, for a pension for the remainder of a life—without any security whatever for the conduct, locality, or even existence, of the pensioner. These pensioners might live where they pleased, and undertake what work they pleased. They were always ready to underbid any applicant dependent on his own unassisted earnings. They might be, and indeed often were, persons living notoriously bad lives.

I fancy my father must have had some foretaste of all this at Gainsborough, for it was much the same case all over the kingdom. It may seem incredible now that manufacturers and millowners should regularly practise such an inhumanity, such a dishonesty, as throwing their old servants on the parish, and receiving them back as paupers—that is, on the understanding that the parish for the future must supplement their earnings out of public funds. At Derby these employers were generally Liberals, generally economists, free-traders, reformers, and all the rest of it. It is true

they were all this in theory, in words, and in political action, but when it came to acts they always did what the most corrupt and bigoted of their opponents did. They wished, so they said, to alter the laws of the game; but till the laws were altered they went by them as they were.

In Parliamentary contests, and in the administration of patronage, Whigs and Tories did just the same, the latter seeing no harm in it, the former pleading the necessity under existing circumstances. All sides ran a race of jobbery in the management of the poor, as in every other matter. Every employer found he was paying for other people's poor, and subsidising his neighbour's wages-book; so, in self-defence, he demanded the same contributions in return.

On looking into matters, my father found abuses as bad as those which condemned the religious houses at the Reformation. Besides this legion of outdoor paupers, or pensioners, as I have described them, the poorhouse itself had as evil a use as the worst house in the worst lane in the town could have, for there was absolutely no discipline. There were persons who had been born—they and several generations of their ancestors—in the house; and there were 'respectable' men in the town whose names were familiarly associated with these scandals.

My father looked well before him. He had a correspondence with Mr. Lowe and Mr. Beecher, who had effected a great reformation in Nottinghamshire. What he had to do became plain enough; but in order to do it he had to fight long and hard battles, both at the Vestry and at the Town Hall. He succeeded

in procuring the adoption of what was called Sturges Bourne's Act, for the establishment of a select vestry, and stopping of the old dangerous appeal of the paupers and their friends to the erring sympathies of the borough magistrates. He succeeded in bringing to the town a very able assistant overseer, who became an important personage there. He almost wholly extinguished the army of so-called out-door paupers, he reduced the expenditure on the poor to less than half in the face of an increasing population, and he established order in place of a scandalous and demoralising disorder.

This was eight years before the great economical reform, commonly called the New Poor Law; and, by anticipation, on its lines. My father's labours, and the great change he effected, appear in the Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry; and, in an abridged form, in the volume of 'Extracts' from the information received by the Commissioners on the Administration of the Poor Laws, published in 1833.

The narrative there reads smoothly enough, and gives a very faint idea of what my father—and, indeed, all of us—had to undergo for two years. All the town, even the manufacturers, even Edward Higginson, the political and religious adviser of the Strutts, were against him. It was patent that free out-door relief helped much to keep down wages, and at the same time to destroy independence.

Not a day passed without some angry passage. Every post, every knock at the door, we expected some disagreeable incident. My father installed a stranger and his wife as master and matron, who

proved equal to the post. But the latter had to deal with notorious viragoes long accustomed to defy authority. She asked if she might send to my mother to countenance her on occasions. My mother consented, and went several times, finding the women ready to tear poor Mrs. Fleming in pieces, simply for not allowing them to go out of doors at pleasure, or upon some other point of discipline. One of these women summoned my mother to the Town Hall on some ridiculous pretence. My mother had to appear, I think twice, and one or two of these Whig magistrates were quite inclined to take the virago's part, if they could do so with any decency.

The subject superseded all others in conversation, for my poor father could not but run upon it, nor was it possible to avoid being continually reminded of it. All the jokes, all the squibs, all the nonsense of the town, ran on it. Of late years I have seldom heard mention of the famous couple Moody and Sankey without being perforce reminded of the threat, 'I'll Mozley and Moody you,' that then got into currency —the latter being the name of the stranger imported by my father to take the office of assistant overseer.

Other troubles there were, ridiculous as well as annoying. Not the least was that, on my father entering upon his office, he found in the workhouse a number of children up to twelve, or more, who had never received either education or the commonest care; who could not even walk, who sprawled about, as if newly converted bipeds, and who spoilt their clothes by their own awkward movements. My father and mother employed some of these lads, and induced

one or two of their friends to share the kind but disagreeable office, with very indifferent success, as far as I can remember.

When the New Poor Law was enacted in 1834, my father was the person principally charged with the formation of the Derby Union and the building of the new town workhouse. He introduced an old friend as the architect. The design answered the purpose. The conditions did not allow more. I forget whether the building stands, for it has been some time superseded by another building, more up to the latest requirements, and further from the town. Among other criticisms, the local architects nicknamed a long narrow passage as the 'Great Souph'—that is, sewer. Mr. Wallace's reply was that it was *Quantum suff.*

CHAPTER LXXV.

ST. WERBURGH'S CHURCH.

IN my notice of Mr. Joseph Pickford I referred very briefly to an affair which was really of great importance, and which alone entitles my father to an honourable place in the traditions of his country and of the Church of England. Upon our arrival at Derby in 1815, it was found impossible to obtain sittings in our parish church, which was St. Werburgh's. The adjacent parish of All Saints, with a smaller population, had a much larger church, which had always

been regarded as a church for the whole town as well as for the parish. My father obtained the use of a square pew in it, and there we sat, under Mr. Charles Stead Hope, for five years. In 1820 my father had to give up the pew to a parishioner. He then succeeded in obtaining, at the usual rent of a guinea a sitting, a pew of five sittings in one of the galleries of St. Werburgh's. Such of the family as could not find room there had to look for it elsewhere in the church or in other churches.

As it happened, in that same year the churchwardens announced at a vestry meeting that all the sittings in the centre aisle would for the future be let for what they would fetch. Naming an early day, they brought in Mr. Eyre, a well-known auctioneer, who went from one pew door to another, inviting bids, and knocking down every pew to the highest bidder. More than a hundred people, many of whom had occupied their sittings all their lives, and their fathers before them, had to give way to new occupants, receiving no further notice than that on one Sunday the beadle told them they must not come to that place the next. But this was not the genteel part of the church; the occupants were of a lower caste; and even the successful bidders were now told shortly that they might have to turn out at a very brief notice in case of their sittings being wanted by their betters. The speculation did not realise quite 50*l.* a year in aid of the rates.

At first we none of us liked our position upstairs. I think it must have been there that I acquired the notion, expressed in one of my Church articles in the

'British Critic,' that it is impossible to pray in a gallery. But for the matter of that people find it difficult to pray anywhere, or anyhow, unless they happen to be in much perplexity and distress, and they are always ready to excuse upon some imaginary pretence their own want of devotion.

Our family was growing in numbers and in bulk, and this state of things was very inconvenient. Early in 1828 my father bought the Friary, and with it a gallery pew of five sittings. The pew was distinctly described in the deed of conveyance as part of the consideration for which the price was paid: the market price of such a pew being at that time a hundred guineas.

So now we had two pews, but in different galleries, one our own, the other rented. That which now became our own we never occupied. After completing the purchase of the Friary my father wrote to the mother and daughter who had till then resided there, requesting them to continue the use of the pew. The truth is the one was aged and the other very helpless, and they would not have known what to do with themselves elsewhere. Thus we wanted more room, indeed more than double what we had.

In 1830 a pew of five sittings came into the market, and my father agreed to buy it on the usual terms. The question of title now came up. It had not been presented to my father in any practical form before, as the fact of the Friary pew having been long held with the Friary had seemed sufficient. The lawyer, after some weeks' delay, said, 'You'll pay your money, and you'll have your pew, and you'll

never be disturbed in possession ; but there's no title, and none can be made.' 'The pew,' he explained, 'cannot legally be detached from the house with which it is now held.' This gave the cue for the subsequent inquiries.

As it chanced, my father was churchwarden—the vicar's churchwarden—now for two years, his colleague being a Unitarian, and leaving my father to act alone generally. My father found that all the galleries rested on faculties, and he resolved to look into the matter. First he looked through the minutes of the vestry meetings for a century back, and found therein the respective and very different histories of the organ gallery and of the north and south galleries. There had been long controversies and frequent change of intention as to these galleries ; but that mattered little, for the minutes referred to faculties applied for and obtained, and on these faculties the whole matter now hinged.

My father sent to Lichfield for copies of the faculties. They came in Latin. I translated them, a little stuck here and there by terms rather new to me. My father's lawyer, however, had already told him their purport. They had been drawn up in accordance with precedent, and they gave no more than the bishop had a right to give as ordinary, acting at the invocation of the parish and churchwardens. They did not assign pews to persons, or to families, or to houses, but to persons and families residing in certain houses, and for as long as they resided in those houses and no longer.

The organ gallery had been built in 1730, at the

cost of the builder, and had been appropriated by faculty to him, to his family, and to certain named inhabitants, all with the above-mentioned reserve. It was evident from the vestry minutes that the parish had wished to give the builder as much interest as possible in the gallery, and had then found their kind intentions thwarted by the authorities at Lichfield.

The north gallery was built in 1778, under what circumstances does not appear: the only entry in the books being the formal assent of the minister, churchwardens, and major part of the parishioners assembled, to the application for a faculty, which of course ran in the usual terms. The fresh accommodation was very soon found inadequate, and it would also seem that the parish was now becoming more alive to the evils of excessive appropriation.

Three propositions for a south gallery were successively considered and rejected, one objection being that, as it would cut off the light, it would then become necessary to glaze the dome, thereby making the church hot in summer and cold in winter. The church, it should be explained, was rebuilt at the same time, on the same plan, and probably by the same architect, as St. George the Martyr's, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, with a level ceiling supported by four pillars, and a dome between them. In the year 1794, Derby, of which George III. used to say on the receipt of an address, 'Here comes Derby at last,' would seem to have been quickened by the universal wave of revolution. Before the application for a faculty it was carefully arranged and decided in a

vestry what seats there were to be and who were to ballot for them, the gallery being now built by the parish, and not by private persons. It was expressly agreed that 'the several persons who shall be successful in such ballot shall use and occupy the same by themselves and family, and not set, or let, or make any pecuniary advantage of the same.' These resolutions were advertised in the Derby paper. The faculty obtained was in the usual terms, restricting the pews to the first proprietors and their families. This gallery therefore, thus bound by these wholesome conditions, had not been built more than twenty-one years before our family came into the parish and became acquainted with the church.

Such, however, is the pace of change even in a quiet town like Derby, and in the quietest part of the town, that nearly all these sittings had now lapsed to the parish through the extinction or removal of the original families. The original, and still more the derivative, owners had indeed dealt with them as private property, selling them, letting them, and attaching them to other houses, and making no difference between parishioners and non-parishioners in their occupation.

My father now could have no doubt that all the sittings, with very few exceptions, were at his disposal. He was churchwarden, in a sense the only one, for the other had the good sense and public spirit not to interfere, except when his official aid was necessary. All this time the churchwardens had on hand a large standing list of applications, many from the occupiers of good houses in the parish. A

church indeed had been lately built in the parish, but it had been built not for the parish, but for the town at large; it was not even a chapel of ease; it was entirely without a parochial or other ecclesiastical status, and it was avowedly the church of a school protesting against a large part of the formularies of the Church of England.

Before my father took any public steps, he sent a statement of the whole case, with copies of the faculties, to Dr. Lushington. The opinion returned was encouraging, yet cautious. It referred to the novelty of the case, to the great uncertainty of the law affecting pews, to the continual inroads of prescription, and the great peril of interference where any prescription could be maintained of a sort to favour the presumption of a faculty, even where none was extant. Pew questions generally, indeed always, took the form of actions for trespass or assault, and, as such, were tried in civil courts on the prevailing principles of common law. Dr. Lushington told my father there was no doubt he was proceeding on the right lines of ecclesiastical law, but there was no saying how far a jury would allow that law to rule any question brought before it.

I much grieve to say that though within this twelvemonth I have seen among my papers a copy of this opinion, I cannot now lay my hands on it. Sir Herbert Jenner also was written to, and his opinion obtained. I cannot remember the exact terms, nor do I think there was more in it than a general admission that the course proposed by my father was right, but that he must take care what he was about,

as he might find common law against him. The question raised was simply whether my father could place sufficient confidence in the law of the Church, that law being also the law of justice and of common sense. He resolved to stand by the law of the Church at all risks, and he had to pay the full penalties of his faith and courage.

His first overt act was to communicate to the vicar the whole state of the case: what he had found in the vestry minutes, the faculties, Dr. Lushington's opinion, and his own intention to reappropriate all the sittings in the church, for the satisfaction of new claims pouring in, and with due regard to existing rights of occupation. The vicar, who never gave himself the slightest concern about the parish, and who did nothing but mumble out an incoherent sermon from loose scraps of paper once a week, took so little notice of this communication that some of his own friends told the Bishop afterwards, no doubt honestly, that my father had not said a word to the vicar about the matter.

My father then convened a vestry, laid the whole subject before them, and announced the intention of the churchwardens to reappropriate the sittings, to meet, as far as possible, the increasing demands for accommodation. It was not till the matter had become fully known, indeed the town's talk, that my father called a general meeting of the parish, by public notice given out in the church and stating the object of the meeting. He stated his case fully, and laid all the documents before the meeting. One or two suggestions were offered and discussed; but all

such pew-owners as attended, though full as much affected as any, were quite satisfied, or at least took no open steps against him.

An exception indeed I must make, and I have already made it in my account of Mr. Joseph Pickford. As far as I am aware he is the only Fellow of Oriel who has left no contribution to the literature of his country or his Church. Possibly he was too deeply impressed with the number and the weight of the volumes already taxing the industry of readers to have the heart to add more. But I must rob him of the solitary distinction of having written nothing. There lies before me, in a hand which I must confess has the advantage of mine, the following letter:—

Friday, October 1, 1830.

SIR,—I most earnestly entreat, that my signature, attached to the resolutions of yesterday's Vestry Meeting at St. Werburgh's, may be erased. I am of opinion, that the power granted to Churchwardens by the eccleslastical law, as it now stands, in the appropriation of Pews, is extremely dangerous at all times; and peculiarly ill-adapted to the present circumstances of the established Church. I bitterly repent of the share I have taken in the transaction, and I beg that, if my name cannot be expunged, my disapprobation of the proceeding may at least be recorded.

I am, your faithful Servant,
JOSEPH PICKFORD.

Henry Mozley, Esq.,
Friary, Derby.

On the fullest reconsideration of the whole matter, I do not see how my father could have acted otherwise than he did, at every stage of it. He might seem, indeed, to have carefully adhered to some regular form of ecclesiastical procedure. At this

first public meeting he announced that the churchwardens would proceed to reappropriate the sittings which had lapsed to the parish by the expiry of the limitations. This would necessarily involve interference with the existing appropriations on the floor of the church, as well as in the galleries; indeed it amounted to the reappropriation of the greater part of all the sittings, whether above or below.

On this difficult task my father set to work with great energy, with the greatest anxiety to do the best, and to give as little annoyance as possible. Annoyance there must be. Many had given eighty or a hundred guineas for a pew, and they were now told they had thrown their money away. They had left the parish, but retained the pew: they would now have to lose not only their money but the pew. They had occupied large pews by themselves or with a chance visitor: they must now share the pew with other rightful occupants. They had bought houses and pews together: if they should have to sell, it would now be the house, without its supposed ecclesiastical adjunct. Some were receiving nice little rents for their pews: the supposed tenants would now enjoy the pews rent free.

The case of the organ gallery certainly was hard, and I am quite sure my father would gladly have been spared an interference, which, under the special circumstances, might receive a personal construction. The gallery had really long since lapsed to the parish, but one of the builder's family had till recently believed herself still owner, and derived an income from it. Though an 'organ gallery,' it was capacious,

extending almost right across the church, which is nearly square. Some time before the present affair, the churchwardens wished to increase the accommodation of the church, and for this purpose proposed to alter the gallery stairs. The proprietress objected to this invasion of her property, and thereupon the vicar, and the gentleman I have designated by the name of 'Gaius,' bought the gallery, paying, I think, 600*l.* for it.

There was, however, a curious incident in this proceeding. The purchasers, or their lawyers, very naturally wanted a title, and evidently expected to find a title in the terms of the original faculty, especially as the parish books showed there had been the greatest wish to give the builder a freehold of his gallery. They discovered that the faculty had failed to carry out the wishes of the parish in 1730, and that it conveyed no such title as they expected, indeed none at all now to the good. The vicar and his friend 'Gaius' accordingly obtained a new faculty, which I never saw, and which I believe my father never saw, conferring absolute power of sale. Armed with this document they paid the money, and confidently believed the organ gallery their own.

My father had no doubt, and I have no doubt, that this mysterious faculty, being in excess of the terms of the original faculty, as also of the powers of the court, was good for nothing, and that the purchase of the gallery was simply 600*l.* given for a sheet of spoilt parchment.

I ought not to omit that 'Gaius' and the vicar had had no intention of deriving any income from the

gallery. They made it a little piece of patronage; and at this time there were many non-parishioners in it glad to get sittings anywhere, when the churches were few, and generally small, and in most cases exceedingly inconvenient. To show the prevailing state of things I may say that when for a month I took the duty of St. Alkmund's, in the summer of 1834, two families entered their pews through doors made in the windows.

It was a hard case for 'Gaius' and the vicar; but my father's own case was quite as hard as any. The Friary pew he had given a hundred guineas for was no longer his, or the Friary pew at all, for the original proprietors had departed, one way or another. He could not purchase an additional pew, for there was no purchase now. Though with a family most regular in its attendance, frequently mustering twelve, and seldom with less than eight or nine, he could not have appropriated to it the requisite amount of sittings upstairs, without the appearance of acting for his own interest. His own share of the general burden was therefore not only loss, but much inconvenience, and a rather painful dilemma.

CHAPTER LXXVI.

A GENERAL APPROPRIATION.

THE churchwardens gave notice four successive Sundays of the intended appropriation, requesting all who had claims on the sittings to be disposed of to send in their names and their requirements. Meanwhile, with the full concurrence of his colleague, my father occupied himself in applying the principles he had found he must act on. He ascertained the history of every sitting—that is, of every personal occupation in the church—and gave full weight to Dr. Lushington's advice that 'if there are any persons who have had long possession, and who are fit persons to be placed in their pews from their condition and families, the churchwardens ought not to disturb them.' He did not disturb any one so qualified. He carefully confined himself to carrying out Dr. Lushington's words, 'that if there be a want of church room in the parish, it is the duty of the churchwardens to make the best arrangements by displacing those who have possession of the seats without legal title, and who, with reference to the state of the parish, are not the persons who would or ought to be seated if the churchwardens exercised a fair discretion.'

As to his own particular part in all this inevitable displacement, which I have mentioned above as a rather difficult and anxious affair, he made up his mind to what in these days is the greatest of sacrifices, one touching caste. The ground-floor was low

caste. It was occupied by lower middle people, small tradesmen, and clerks. There was one spot, and one only, where, with very slight alteration, a pew could be made large enough, barely large enough, for my father's family. The site, too, compelled the square form. I may say that none of the family liked the descent—downfall it seemed—but we all felt the necessity of the case. My mother stepped in to make the pew as endurable as she could with cheerful and comfortable fittings.

After all this preparation and publication, successive notices and invitations, the churchwardens named a day when the reappropriation was to take effect, and sent to all who were affected by the change, directing them to the sittings henceforth placed at their disposal. The murmuring and dissatisfaction of which the churchwardens had been aware from the beginning now began to show itself in the form of saucy and defiant replies, and it was obvious that there was some encouragement from persons professing to be authorities, and some organisation and design. One or two gentlemen announced that they intended to defend their property by force, and some ladies threatened at least a passive resistance. The persons thus declaring themselves aggrieved had already had the remedy pointed out to them. They had been told at every step of the proceedings, and in the circulars addressed to them individually, that the appropriation was subject to revision by the ordinary, who might be appealed to in a regular way. This, however, did not answer the purpose of their new advisers.

My father was just then in London, and having heard rumours of discontent and threats of worse, he resolved to call on Bishop Ryder. The day before he could do this he received, forwarded from Derby, a letter which the Bishop had written, apparently in haste, from the House of Lords. He had been informed, so he said, that my father had been 'making wholly unauthorised alterations in the pews, and in the occupancy of the pews.' He accordingly ordered my father 'to suspend all further steps,' adding that 'he was greatly surprised that any such attempt should have been made.' My father lost no time in calling upon his lordship, and found himself regarded as a delinquent guilty of the most outrageous and unwarrantable proceedings. He told his story, and he produced his documents. They went for nothing. On the simultaneous testimony of two clergymen, neither of them now of St. Werburgh's parish, it was established that, with 'a Socinian colleague, he had driven out a considerable number of poor persons from the places they had sat in all their days, to clear an exorbitant space for himself and his family; from mere wantonness or envy he had disturbed all the church, placing and displacing whom he chose, with no regard to right or occupation, and had filled the parish with enmity and discord'—all these charges illustrated with sundry details of peculiar hardship and wrong.

The two men who had passed themselves off to the Bishop as independent and impartial witnesses, but whose names did not then reach my father, were the curate-in-charge of St. Peter's, and a young

clergyman, who had now ceased to be curate of St. Werburgh's, and was on the point of quitting his residence in the parish. They had been for some time in constant communication and co-operation as to the best means of upsetting all that my father had done. Both had pews they wished to secure as private property. Both had friends they wished to serve with a like end. The latter was an intimate friend of 'Gaius,' the unlucky purchaser of the organ gallery. Both were 'Evangelicals,' or thought themselves so; and if I have erred in ascribing to the school a certain want of 'mercy and grace,' it certainly is not with respect to these two men.

The Bishop announced to my father, and through my father, his intention to come to Derby in five weeks to settle the business himself, and meanwhile complainants were to send him particulars of their cases. This was not only to take the matter entirely out of the hands of the churchwardens, but to deprive them of all means of knowing the precise nature of the claims they would have to meet—that is, if they should be allowed to meet them at all. The two men I have mentioned set to work to make the best use of the time, going from house to house disseminating opinions on pew law which they must have known to be unsound, and publishing reports of the Bishop's letters which they knew to be garbled or false.

The ex-curate sent to the newspaper one letter he had received from the Bishop, so scandalously garbled that the editor refused to publish it. In a very short time the two agitators created a general conviction that everything my father had done would

be undone, and that the pews and the proprietors would return to what they had been before. Indeed, to make that quite safe, the curate of St. Peter's, no doubt in concert with his friend, sent round a *quasi* authoritative injunction to all who had accepted their new positions in the church, to return immediately to their old ones, carrying back their books and cushions, and taking care to be in good time to secure their old seats. 'Gaius' rallied the scattered occupants of the organ gallery in person, but not without having tried in vain to induce the parish beadle to do it for him. Others, indeed a good many of them, came to my father to ask what they were to do, placed thus between two fires.

The Bishop bestowed an immense amount of labour on the claims poured in, working in the dark, and without any communication with the only man who could help him—that is, my father. His increasing difficulties gave him some insight into the nature of the work he had undertaken to revise. In a letter to the ex-curate he spoke of the immense and most unusual pains my father had taken to ascertain his duty, and said he had concluded from my father's manner and conversation that he had done it with judgment and impartiality. He had evidently discovered that his intervention must now rest solely on the ground that the work had been carried out without previous communication with the incumbent, and without the approval of the ordinary. The Bishop conceived that my father had confessed himself so far in the wrong.

The truth was my father had been taken aback

by something the Bishop had said at his interview with him in town, and really had not known what to say. As a matter of fact, as I have said above, he had very early communicated the whole design, with the documents, to the vicar and his curate. But he had early resolved to take on himself all responsibility as to details. This was his choice, but it was also a necessity. As far as it could be a matter of choice, my father found that the churchwardens had continually placed and displaced people on their sole responsibility—notably in the year 1820, when they had let every sitting in the middle aisle to the highest bidder. My father had been churchwarden at the very much larger parish church of Gainsborough, where all this work was left unreservedly to the office. He had now to save the dignity and authority of the office—that is, its efficiency. Then for the necessity. It was quite certain that the vicar would have objected to every single arrangement. Waiting for his consent to each particular would have amounted to doing nothing at all.

It is a case of by no means uncommon occurrence. What is to be done when the incumbent has firmly set his face against every good thing that can be done in his parish? I shall be told it is very shocking to suppose any number of clergymen capable of such wickedness; but it is a matter of fact, and not to be wondered at. So far as ecclesiastical appointments of all sorts go the way of the world, and are made by buying and selling, by jobs, by currying favour with patrons, by political subservience, or any of the means ordinarily governing place, position, and power, so far

the Church is like any other body of men in this evil world, and the proportion of bad or good-for-nothing clergymen must be quite as great as the proportion of bad or good-for-nothing men generally. There is no such rule of selection as to make one proportion different from the other. But it is quite obvious that the eternal interests of a parish and the administration of a church ought not to be risked on the bare chance of the incumbent not being a bad man.

Bishop Ryder, I must say by the way, was a very simple man, very averse to form and state, and perhaps rather too single-handed. I remember his coming down to examine the 'Bell School,' then held in a building that had been a mill of some sort, near Sadler Gate Bridge. Complaints had reached him, and he wished to judge for himself. I was present. I thought the examination not quite fair to the children or to the school managers, but it left no doubt that the children were all sadly backward and ignorant. He might not quite condescend enough, but there was no ascending power in them.

I forget when it was that my father, coming home from a walk on the London Road, in rain and I think snow, and taking I suppose a short cut through St. Peter's Churchyard, perceived a small group standing about a clergyman. It must be a funeral, he thought. He hastened to the spot that he might give the clergyman the benefit of his umbrella. He then found it was Bishop Ryder, with the curate, the clerk, the sexton, and one or two others, consecrating an addition to the churchyard. My father held his umbrella over the Bishop to the conclusion of the ceremony.

I have lately read of a like ceremony at a seaside watering-place being attended by three parish choirs, comprising eighty singing men and boys.

I must add that Bishop Ryder followed an episcopate from which he could have derived little to help and guide him. The Earl of Cornwallis had held the See for forty-three years; and, as an example of the way in which its duties were discharged, I may mention that upon my sister Jane, in 1820, sending home an account of her Confirmation, and of her previous careful examination by Mr. Campbell, my mother observed that there had not been a Confirmation in Derby since we came there five years before. My mother, as I have related above, had not been examined, or even presented, at her own Confirmation, but she had come to regard both as necessary. She was on a visit to Gainsborough when she received my sister's letter, which she read to her friends. They laughed at the idea of the children of respectable people being examined for Confirmation. They applied for tickets, and received them as a matter of course.

As the day of the Bishop's visit approached, the tone of the opposition became more and more exulting and confident. My father relied on the merits of his case, and fully expected that, so far as concerned the hearing of it and the discussion of it, he would stand on the same footing as his accusers. He expected that, as the parish books express it, the Bishop would first suffer 'the churchwardens to account in respect of their actings in their office,' and afterwards hear what objections, founded on private claims or general principles, might be brought against them,

giving them ample opportunity of reply. The Bishop came, and, from the moment he set foot in the town, was much in the position of the poor lady surrounded by Comus and his crew, and beset with enchantments, transformations, impostures, and disguises.

The whole of that day he spent with the complainants, their agents and abettors; the evening particularly in company with 'Gaius' and the ex-curate. The next day all met, as appointed, at the church. The Bishop came, looked round for a few minutes, and then withdrew to his inn, directing the claimants to send him their cases, and the churchwardens to draw up a table of the whole occupancy prior to the new appropriation. The churchwardens did their work, making a plan of the whole church, below and above, with the names of the former occupants inserted in their old places. Proceeding to the inn, they sent it in, with their names. Much to their surprise they were not admitted. Still more to their surprise, they had to witness the admission of the claimants one after another for two mortal hours. Nor were these private conferences, for whenever the door opened there came forth the sound of many voices.

After two hours the churchwardens were ordered in, and found the Bishop, with the ex-curate at his right hand, surrounded by 'Gaius,' the curate of St. Peter's, and a numerous company of the malcontents. It was instantly plain that everything had been settled, and my father had been summoned, not to account for his acts as churchwarden, but only to say what he had to say about his own pew. On his

entering the room the Bishop said, 'But, Mr. Mozley, this large pew of yours'; upon which, before my father could open his mouth, the ex-curate began a coarse attack upon him for the alteration made to accommodate his family.

The pew, I must repeat, was not a large one. It was small for the number it had to accommodate. It was smaller than the two gallery pews my father had had to give up. It was smaller, rateably, than the space respectively allotted to all the occupants of the galleries. For many years after this it was the most crowded pew in the church. I can answer for myself. With the necessity of hassocks, there was neither standing room, nor kneeling room, nor even sitting room in the pew.

It has often occurred to me to ask what the Bishop would have done if my father had replied, 'My lord, since this pew, which I thought moderate, and indeed humble, gives so much offence, I wish to leave the matter in your lordship's hands. I ask for suitable accommodation for the largest ratepayer in the parish, with a family of eleven children, most of them now grown up, and at home a great part of the year.' I am sure that if the Bishop had thereupon appropriated to my father the gallery pew he had bought, and, with it, the gallery pew he had been long renting, the malcontents would have been furious.

The ex-curate then attacked my father on the score of the 'alteration.' I have not already explained that this unhappy pew had been one of two pews, both pretending to be double—that is, with seats face to face—yet never really occupied doubly: the one

being less than five feet wide, the other less than four feet. My father had simply taken ten inches from the smaller one, leaving it still a good single pew, and added ten inches to the larger one, making it a far from roomy 'square' pew. Nobody knew the requirements of the site and the dimensions better than the ex-curate, for they had been directly under his eye for five years.

Then, where he was, at the Bishop's right hand, he charged my father with taking away a free seat, omitting to add, what he must have known, that it was only an exchange. The whole company then rose and proceeded to the church. After a few explanatory remarks and advice to the churchwardens for their future guidance, the Bishop produced a paper and read off his 'determinations' on the several complaints. These determinations, announced and delivered as such, and therefore final, were grounded on misstatements and absolute inventions, for which my father was more or less unprepared. Apparently he was not expected to offer any objection to them, and was out of order in doing so. Even when he ventured to be a remonstrant out of season, he could only offer impromptu replies and explanations, necessarily hurried, and, indeed, now too late. He felt, however, that truth, a just cause, and the interests of the Church were in his hands; and now, after several hours of anxiety, labour, and pain, he fought the battle which I have to relate in the next chapter.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

A TROOP OF CLAIMANTS.

THE determinations, with the accompanying reasons, were evidently those that had been dictated to his lordship by the company besetting and surrounding him now for many weeks, and particularly on that morning and the previous day, during which time everybody was listened to except the churchwardens. Now, in the course of a long life, with many strange experiences, and having had to study many details of commercial and political roguery, electoral corruption, personations, bubble companies, professional swindles, jobbery and impostures of all kinds, I may truly say I have never met with anything to exceed the fictions and trickeries palmed upon his lordship on this occasion. I must be content with a selection of them, and take them one by one.

Some years before this, a lady, who knew she had no legal right to a gallery pew, but who believed she could make a right, sold it for a hundred guineas. The purchaser was advised by his lawyer to get the vendor's signature to a bond to return the purchase-money in case of the sale being found void. The lady now announced that nothing should induce her to return the hundred guineas. The purchaser, a quiet old gentleman, held his tongue, abiding the issue, hoping indeed to see his hundred guineas. He had made no claim to the churchwardens, but the conclave about the Bishop made a claimant of him,

in order to obtain an episcopal appropriation for him, and so disable him from recovering the hundred guineas to which he would be entitled in case of disturbance. This was simply to abuse the episcopal office to the creation of a new right in the face of the Church's law. The gentleman had bought the pew; but as it would not do to tell the Bishop this, the claim had been represented to him as resting 'on long possession,' and on the presumed appropriation of the pew to the house which the 'claimant' now occupied.

The next claim was on the same grounds of long possession and presumed appropriation to the claimant's residence. The fact was, the claimant had bought the pew ten years before this, and had been lately trying very hard to sell it again.

My father had not interfered with Mr. Joseph Pickford, who, however, had got himself inserted as a claimant in order to strengthen and enlarge his right in a pew. He looked on the pew as property, and the pew was then supposed to go with his house. As a bachelor, occupying a corner of that house, and having two duties at a church four miles off, he did not want a sitting in the morning or afternoon. He did frequent the evening service, but did not then occupy the pew under question, but sat wherever he fancied among the mixed congregation below. He looked on the pew as his property, and his avowed intention was to do what he pleased with it.

In the next case the pew had long lapsed to the parish, and had nevertheless been sold and let by its supposed owners. It happened, however, now to be in the same hands as the house it was originally

allotted to. It was very scantily occupied; and the churchwardens had appropriated it to one who had stronger claims than the present occupant of the house.

In the next claim, the pew, a very large one, had long reverted to the parish. My father had called on the lady occupying it to place two sittings in it at the service of the parish. The lady thereupon placed, not her own housekeeper, but a friend's housekeeper in one of the spare sittings, and that housekeeper's brother in the other. She now claimed the whole.

A lady was represented to the Bishop as the possessor of three pews, but requiring only one. This was the very pew my father had bought with the Friary. My father was therefore obliged to say that, if there was any possession in the matter, the pew was his, but that, as the lady had always occupied it, he had requested her to continue to do so. Thereupon, the ex-curate, in the church, in the presence of the Bishop, and of a good many clergyman as well as laymen, said, 'Now, Mr. Mozley, you *did not* buy this pew with your house.' The ex-curate never made any apology for this atrocious insult; and when told by a gentleman that my father had shown him the title-deeds to confirm what he had said, excused his own error with, 'Somebody told me so.'

This is the man who, some time after the publication of my 'Reminiscences,' sent to the 'Record' a long letter headed 'Facts *versus* Fiction.' I read the letter through without being able to make out what were the statements the writer meant to characterise as 'fiction,' or what were the 'facts' he meant

to set against mine. He says that I have thrown a veil of charity over Mr. Pickford. If I had any qualms about my treatment of that individual, they were not that I feared I had been too kind to his memory. A noble and learned friend of mine has informed me that if the Warwick apple-woman who was found to be his heir and representative should pelt me with her rotten apples, I should not be able to recover more than a farthing damages. The writer extols 'Gaius.' He is bound to do so, for he was himself one of that gentleman's satellites, as appears incidentally in the present narrative. He admits that 'Gaius' sat over him all the time he was at St. Werburgh's, but asserts that he never remarked upon his sermons. I never said that 'Gaius' had done so. I only said that if this gentleman, or any other curate, had ever strayed into 'mercy and grace,' he would have been sure to hear of it. His sermons were not without ability, and usefulness; but they were the same thing over and over again, which the Bible is not. He says that Mr. Hope was non-resident. Mr. Hope resided in the Vicarage of St. Alkmund's, literally in the churchyard, from as long as I can remember till the Reform mob rendered the Vicarage uninhabitable, and the poor gentleman himself, in a short time, unequal to duty. Does the writer mean that if Mr. Hope resided in one parish he did not at the same time reside in the other, which adjoined it, the two churches being a quarter of a mile apart? He excuses the vicar of St. Werburgh's on the singular ground that he was not a man for a dinner-party. I said nothing about that.

I only said that the man never put his foot in his parish, except for his Sunday services, and that he knew nothing about his parishioners. This has nothing to do with dinner-parties. Of himself he says that it was not 'Gaius' who brought him to Derby, and then gives his own account of his introduction. It does not preclude—what everybody believed—that 'Gaius' had a voice in the matter. But it would be very idle indeed to have a controversy with a man who says just what he pleases, never makes an apology, and has always ready at the tip of his tongue, 'Somebody told me so.'

But I must return to the 'claimants.' A pew occupied, after a fashion, by a surgeon had long since reverted legally to the parish. The surgeon paid a separate rent for it. He only came himself once or twice a year, and there were never more than two in a pew meant for five. The pew had been recently without a single occupant for a whole winter. In view of the new appropriation he came once to the pew with all his apprentices, and never again, except to meet the Bishop on the present occasion. The churchwardens had appropriated to him two of the five sittings, for, except on the above occasion, he had never occupied more than two. But he wanted all, expecting also to have them all now rent free. With this modest request the Bishop—under advice, no doubt—complied.

A lady believed herself possessed of two pews, long since lapsed to the parish, and got the aid of a clever solicitor, who had rather a craze for acquiring cheap town property without a good title, and conse-

quently safest in a lawyer's hands. The lady could only produce a sister as a fellow-claimant, and this would not suffice for both pews. Her legal friend told her how to do it. She was the fortunate owner of the 'Three Tuns' in the Sadler Gate, and the honest publican who was her tenant there was entirely at her service. He had, however, already sent to the churchwardens a written application for a pew, stating that 'he has a great Desire to Continue in that he now Occupies.' It was on the ground-floor, and he had sat in it fifty-six years, indeed before either north or south gallery had been built.

When the Bishop read his determinations in the church, my father was astonished to hear the above lady's second gallery pew awarded to the publican, who had earnestly desired to be left where he was below. My father stated this fact. The Bishop proposed that the publican should answer for himself, and sent the beadle for him. Two clergymen disappeared out of the church, followed the beadle, detached the publican from him, and bound him upon his duty to his landlady to claim the gallery pew, which he did. Astonished as my father was, he had the presence of mind to ask, 'Did not you write to ask that you might be allowed to remain where you were, and where you had sat for fifty-six years?' 'Yes, I did,' the poor caitiff answered; 'but now I want a gallery pew.' The roguery of the affair was, however, so manifest that, after a long correspondence, the publican's name gave way to another. The lady, however, obtained for the present what she wanted, the exclusive appropriation of

one of the largest gallery pews to herself and her sister.

Another case illustrated the difficulties in which the ordinary may find himself, if he will not trust the churchwardens. There was a large corner pew downstairs, for which there was reason to believe there had once been a faculty. It had now been occupied occasionally by a lady, with a few pupils, lodging in the roomy house of a brewer—an aged gentleman, whose family consisted of self and son, and who died in the midst of this affair. The brewer had sent in his own claim to the churchwardens, and had expressed himself satisfied. The above-mentioned large corner pew was the reputed property of a lawyer, owner of the house that the pew had gone with. It must have been the brewer's 'family'—that is, the now surviving son—who threw himself into the scramble with a bold claim in behalf of a 'family' described as eight, by the addition of all the lodgers. The lawyer came to the rescue of his property, and sent in his claim. It so happened that the line of the church wall left an open niche between the wall and the pew, a yard long and half a yard wide, which is much less than the area allowed to each child in an infants' school. It had always been used for the deposit of umbrellas. The lawyer, however, regarded it as a purtenance; but as an ecclesiastical purtenance is a somewhat recondite affair, and might entail inquiry, he claimed it as a second pew, the dimensions of which he naturally did not particularise. The Bishop, finding there were two pews, one large, the other presumably somewhat smaller, appropriated

the large one—the only pew, in fact—to the bold aggressor and his family of lodgers, leaving to the lawyer the umbrella corner he had imported into his claim. The now successful aggressor instantly came to the conclusion that if a Bishop could take away a man's pew, and give it to anybody who might ask for it, pews were bad property, and it was better to be rid of it. So he immediately advertised for sale a large pew in the parish church of St. Peter.

The ex-curate, who had sent in no claim to the churchwardens, and who, in fact, had no ground for a claim, sent in one to the Bishop. It was for a pew held with his house. The said pew had lapsed to the parish. The ex-curate was then a bachelor, and had nobody to put in it. He was leaving the parish. The churchwardens, had appropriated the pew to a family with the strongest possible claim. The question lay between the said family and the ex-curate's house, to which he wished to attach a pew. The Bishop allowed the claim temporarily.

Two claims were made, each for three sittings. The churchwardens could only give the two claimants a pew of five sittings between them. They gave the odd sitting to the strongest claim, as they thought it, and the one of the longest standing. The other claimant had now made the most stir, and so got the Bishop to give him three sittings. The question was which knew most about it, the Bishop or the churchwardens.

My father's opponents, including, I may observe by the way, at least six clergymen, three of them Pharisees, three of them Herodians, from first to last

took the utmost pains to make the arrangement for my father's own family the head and front of his offending. By giving this personal character to the affair, they trusted to put principle out of sight, and to draw attention from their own tactics in the great controversy. In the very great difficulty my father had found himself in when he came to his own case, not choosing to incur envy by taking his due share of the gallery space, where he was now the owner of one pew and the renter of another, he decided to appropriate to his family, by far the largest in the parish, an omnibus pew on the ground-floor, close to the chancel, and opposite the reading-desk.

The name I have given to it may suggest sittings of a charitable character. The fact, however, was, that it was one of the pews let to renters from the year 1820; and it was most irregularly occupied and attended in consequence of its inconvenient and uncomfortable shape and position. Like all the other renters, these were under warning to leave at short notice, and they had been changing continually and rapidly of their own accord.

Of the persons paraded to the Bishop as removed, dispossessed, exterminated, &c., one now claimed for two sittings, having never rented or used more than one; another had left the church six months, and gone to St. John's; and another had only taken a sitting six months, for the purpose of attending the evening lecture, while retaining his seat at St. John's. With simplicity rather than guile, this renter now availed himself of the rush to send the Bishop a claim for two others of his family, who had never at-

tended the church at all, but were regular frequenters of St. Peter's. He had not even sent in any claim to the churchwardens. There remained only three who could be called substantial cases, and they had already been carefully provided for sufficiently near the pulpit.

A lady and her two daughters had rented a pew below since 1820, and had immediately sublet the two spare sittings. The churchwardens appropriated the whole pew to the existing occupants, without recognising the subletting. The Bishop's 'determination' now stated that 'two persons have been put in by the churchwardens.' Another case arose evidently out of the old difficulty caused by the utterly unecclesiastical custom of putting 'Free' on a pew door. An old couple had long found it hard to please themselves, and had wandered here and there. They had sent in no application to the churchwardens. They now sent the Bishop a claim for 'themselves and family.' The said family had long been occupying some free sittings, and these the churchwardens, in accordance, I believe, with the terms of a grant, had now inscribed 'Free Seats.' The 'family' did not like this, and wanted seats to call their own, which they could easily have got by application to the churchwardens, so far as appropriation confers temporary and conditional ownership.

Then for the organ gallery. The Bishop had had no choice but to declare the purchase void, and this might have been done without further remark. But he added the words: 'although he conceived that

the claimants had been deceived by the tenor of the faculty, which distinctly allowed of a sale.' This could not refer to the original faculty of 1730, which distinctly did not allow of a sale; it could only refer to the new faculty, obtained upon representations from some parties concerned in the recent purchase of the gallery, alleging, among other things, that the original faculty was insufficient, and that a new faculty was wanted with larger powers. The purchasers had not been deceived by a faculty which had been their own dictation, and, so far, their own creation. It is a self-evident maxim, *Non decipitur qui scit se decipi.*

'My father had earnestly desired, and I must say naturally expected, some opportunity of stating the principles on which the appropriation had been made, especially as to its necessity. He had no such opportunity in any stage whatever, not at the Bishop's first rapid visit to the church, not at the inn, where anybody was admitted except the churchwardens, not on the return to the church, not at the hurried close of the proceedings. He and his colleague, and the one or two others that stood by him, had to raise their voices against a host, now with a Bishop at their head, or in their hands rather. He tried to get a hearing for the principles on which he had proceeded, and was immediately stopped. He produced a large bundle of applications for sittings, which the Bishop's determinations would render it impossible to satisfy. His lordship had, in fact, now granted away some scores of sittings to be held unoccupied or useless, being over and above what the claimants

could occupy; while there were strong claims for as many sittings for those who had none. The churchwardens, however, were told there was now no time to consider them, as the Bishop had an engagement elsewhere.

The Bishop must have felt there was a case to be patched up, for before leaving he went into my father's pew, and said: 'Well, Mr. Mozley, I must say, you've taken good care of yourself,' forgetting that a pew might be roomy and comfortable for one person, but yet be contracted and uncomfortable for a dozen or more, which it certainly was. My father ventured to observe that he had sacrificed much more ample accommodation in a much better part of the church, including the Friary pew, which he had paid a handsome sum for. The Bishop then left, evidently, much to the satisfaction of the malcontents, promising to send a fair copy of his decisions through his secretary. Possibly Mr. Hayworth had some misgivings, for it was not till five weeks after that the copy arrived.

The ex-curate was no longer taking duty at St. Werburgh's. His successor was there, Mr. Latham, afterwards Canon, and well known for his work at the Schoolmistresses' Training College, and in other ways. The licence of the new curate was not yet made out, and the Bishop had accordingly accepted the interference of the retiring curate. Mr. Latham became intimate with our family, though in after years, and for a long time, there ensued a distance, for which, I believe, neither he nor my father was answerable. A little time before Canon Latham's death, he fell in

with my brother Charles, and renewed the old friendship. He spoke warmly of my father, and said he never forgot my father's look and manner at one of those pew meetings in the church. This must have been the Bishop's 'visitation.'

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

PEACE.

THE reading of these determinations, with the door apparently closed against further discussion upon them, was celebrated as a great victory on one side, and suffered as a great defeat on the other—that is, my father's. It did not, however, produce more than a few hours' lull in the storm. I was at Oxford at the time, but I heard that my father had never been so down-hearted. He thought of letting things take their own course, and leaving the Bishop to enforce his own determinations. Then he even thought of taking his family from the church, and finding room for them elsewhere. The younger spirits about him kept him up. They discussed some grave questions very gaily, and I was invited to say what I thought upon them. Was it necessary to carry out these determinations, if, as was certain, they were contrary to Church law? How about an appeal to the Archbishop? The family almost made up its mind to this. Meanwhile, the correspondence between the Bishop and the claimants, severally and collectively

through the ex-curate, and also between the Bishop and my father, was as active as ever, and as troublesome as ever.

This very day I find, on looking at old letters, that, at the request of the family, I wrote for my father a letter, to be sent in his name to the Bishop. The letter very much pleased the family, and very much comforted my father, who read it over and over again, and would not have a word altered. The Bishop would see it was written for him, he said, but he did not object to the Bishop knowing he had sons who could help him. Father or son, it was all the same for that.

The Bishop's answer, dated December 30, 1830, showed that he had very imperfectly mastered the details of his own determinations, for while insisting on mine host of the 'Three Tuns' having the pew which he had ostensibly and most unwillingly claimed, the Bishop was under the impression that it was in the body of the church. In fact, it was a front pew in the gallery, where poor old Boniface would have looked as ridiculous as in the pulpit itself. Again the Bishop charged my father with not having acted with the great caution and circumspection Sir H. Jenner had recommended; and, as if to close the correspondence, says: 'I cannot but add that the arrangement for your own convenience is the most complete in the whole church, and that I endeavoured to my utmost to remove all ill-will which the removal of various persons in order to accomplish it had produced.'

By this time—that is, by the last day of 1830—

they who had got what they claimed from the Bishop had no longer any doubt of acquiring the perpetual ownership of their pews. Besides the advertisement of a pew to be sold in St. Peter's, no less than thirteen pews were offered for sale in the Corporation Church —that is, All Saints'. All the lawyers in the town were agog. Half a dozen were assisting with their advice, and with their actual presence at the Bishop's visit, and telling their clients that Church law was against them, but that they might snap their fingers at Church law.

In the third week of January, 1831, I was at Oxford, in Palmer's lodgings, opposite Merton, Blanco White's fellow-lodger or *locum tenens*, I forget which, when I had a letter from Derby which I might almost say drove me beside myself. The fair copy of the Bishop's 'determinations' had come, with so little alteration as to make it probable that the secretary had been too bewildered with the mass of correspondence to do more than fall back on the Bishop's notes. The sum of it was that the whole affair had been decided against my father, who was now to bear the obloquy of selfish motives, wanton removals, disturbing the peace and harmony of a parish, want of common feeling for aged and deaf people, and a good deal more. My correspondent alluded to the objection I had always felt to publicity, and asked whether that scruple ought not to be sacrificed at such an emergency, when the honour of the family and its position in the town were at stake. We should never be good for anything at all in Derby; and the Church—indeed truth itself—would

suffer at our hands, if we failed of our very utmost to support it.

After thinking over the letter an hour or so, and feeling that nothing I could say or do within the compass of a sheet of paper would be of any use, I resolved to start for Derby. But I was in a curious difficulty. I don't think I had a sovereign about me. The junior treasurer was not up. I had, too, drawn upon him as much as I could decently. My only friend up was Newman, and I could not screw up my courage to ask him for a loan. More than all, I had been lavish with my Fellowship—buying an organ amongst other follies—and had been reminded at Derby that I had to live upon it. Before long it occurred to me that going to Derby by coach would take two days, including a night at a big hotel, and that I should be only half a day longer if I did the journey on foot. So this I made up my mind to do. I was always only too glad of an excuse for tramping. The chief drawback now was that the weather was muggy and the travelling bad.

Starting about noon, I walked twenty-seven miles —there must have been a moon, but I cannot remember—and put up at a village inn. The next morning it proved a hard frost. I had planned to sleep at Leicester, but on arriving there I liked the look of the place so little, and I felt so strong, that I went on to Mount Sorrel, a curious little granite village. This was fifty miles. Early in the day a commercial traveller offered me a lift, which I was glad to accept; equally glad, however, to get down when, after two miles of it, I found myself stiff and

cold. At Mount Sorrel, besides sore feet and divers aches and pains, I got my face flushed by the blazing fire of the common parlour, while listening to the conversation of the blacksmith and other village worthies. I could hardly sleep a wink. Early in the morning I was again afoot, happily on a hard road, and found myself with my Derby friends before the lunch things had been cleared away.

They were astonished at my appearance and at the account I gave of myself, but in five minutes we were in the thick of the great pew question, to which every day was bringing more and more aggravation. About every one of the Bishop's determinations they had now more to tell me than could be told by letters, even in what may be called that heroic age of letter-writing, when a young lady would sit down with the biggest sheet she could get in the shops, and by the aid of microscopic handwriting bring a pamphlet within a ninepenny postage. We could not but amuse ourselves with the many traits of character brought out in this strange conflict, and we became somewhat too eager that the world at large should share our natural amusement as well as our just indignation.

Here was the rock we split upon—I most of all, and most against better knowledge. Our adversaries had given a grossly personal character to the question, and we accepted that issue, and were personal in return. It was settled I was to sum up the whole affair, in all its generalities and all its particulars, in all its history, law, rationale, and gossip. With truth and justice, as well as good intentions, on our side, we could not but prevail; but even if we were vanquished

for the present, there would be a record for those that came after. It would be a pamphlet, of course—'A Letter to the Bishop, &c.,' in my father's name.

The next morning I was ensconced in a room upstairs, in the midst of documents and correspondence. At once I found I was not quite myself. It was January, the days lengthening, the cold strengthening. My face was flushed, my head hot, with my hundred miles walk, plus the excitement of the family meeting. My hands and feet were cold; the action of the heart was accelerated. I felt as if I could write and write for ever, without the power of controlling either thought or style. I could only write fast and furious. The regulator was gone. I had no longer the power of condensation or of bringing things to a point. It was a torrent down a slope. This did not affect the law which I was laying down, and which was never impeached. Nor did it affect the truth of my statements, which I took on trust, and which all proved accurate, with one very trifling exception—a lady had bought a pew, not the claimant herself. But the state I was now in, and the circumstances, did affect the tone and the style, which certainly were of a sort to leave sores never to be healed.

Sticking to my work I scarcely went out of doors, but paced like a wild beast to and fro within my cage. The work lengthened in my hands. The first idea was a sheet or two, twenty or thirty pages of rather small type. It grew to near a hundred—a book rather than a pamphlet. But time was precious, for every Sunday was bringing in new difficulties besides intensifying the old. All was confusion. The Bishop

had upset my father's appropriations, and had not yet sent an official copy of his own determinations. Some of the congregation stuck to the former, some caught at the latter. A most unexpected ally appeared on the scene. The leading physician in the town, and the grandest-looking figure in it, took the pew my father had assigned to him, and declared that he would not give it up. As it chanced, this stopped a whole train of the Bishop's determinations. The enemy wrote to the Bishop that my father was not carrying out his orders; and he accordingly wrote to my father with an urgent request that he would. The physician also wrote to the Bishop, who by this time had learnt something about him, and who replied, oddly enough, that he had not been aware the doctor had been in so respectable station of life.

Nobody wished this confusion at an end so much as my father. He became a little impatient. When did I mean to come to the Bishop's determinations? At last I came to them, and gamboled among them at a fine rate. I was no longer tedious, but even this must have an end. It did end at last, but not till all the family had observed that I was looking worn, pale, and thin, and that I could not have gone on much longer.

One of my sisters says in a letter dated February 7, 1831:—

Tom's pamphlet has taken him much more trouble, and has been a much more tedious affair altogether, than he or Papa at all expected. He says, indeed, that he never had any one thing to do in the whole course of his life that required so much perseverance and study as this does. I shall be very glad when it is done, for it is sometimes quite painful to see him obliged to

force his attention to it, till his feet are perfectly cold, and his head is as hot.

I think I was five weeks over my task. As soon as it was completed a copy was sent to the Bishop, and two days after it was widely distributed alike to friend and foe in the town.

The Bishop's acknowledgment of it came soon. The only extant record of it is a single line in a letter from my brother James, 'the Bishop's letter is quite touching'; but I remember we were all of us touched. His singleness of purpose and real affectionateness did for him and for his work more than any amount of genius and learning, though I don't know of his wanting for them. In a few days we heard rumours of a commission; and in a fortnight or so it was announced that a commission of clergymen and laymen, not of the town but of the near neighbourhood, would inquire into the whole matter. They finally drew up a report confirming all that the churchwardens had done, with two or three trifling exceptions already anticipated. While they were making their inquiries, and some time before the promulgation of their report with the Bishop's approval, Easter came, and, to my father's very great surprise, the parish elected him its churchwarden.

A letter from my brother James at Oxford some time after contains the following, which is interesting on many accounts:—

Henry Wilberforce only went away this morning, so that I have been able to see something of him. I went to him on Saturday morning, it must have been ten, and found him in bed—just like him. He excused his laziness by saying that he

had not got to bed till one, up to which time he had been wandering about from room to room talking. You see he is just the same that he always was. I stayed talking with him in bed for two hours. One subject that we hit upon is rather interesting to us. He incidentally asked me whether you had not been writing a strong pamphlet against the Bishop of L. and C. I knew pretty well to what he was alluding, but I was considerably surprised at the matter having got to his ears. However, he quickly let me know that he was acquainted with the grounds of the remonstrance, the arrangement of the pews, and the parochial quarrelling that had followed. It seems he had been dining at the Bishop's, where the subject had accidentally been brought out, I don't know by whom. The Bishop, he said, acknowledged himself to have been in error. The notion they had about the authorship was that you had written one half, and Papa the other. Ryder had read it through, and had come to this decision. The first part he attributed to you, because it dealt so much in general principles, and also bore some similarity to what he knew of your style of writing. He had liked it very much on the whole. Wilberforce asked me pointblank how much was written by you. This was rather a hard driving question. I made a rather bungling answer. I said you had written almost all of it—which was something very like an equivocation, I confess. He wished very much to see one, and thought Papa might as well send him one. I had one in my desk all the while; but as I did not know how far I might venture to lose sight of it, I did not say anything about it.

The Letter to the Bishop was not intended to persuade or to soothe our antagonists, but to convince the reason, with possibly some passing exasperation of the feelings. Whether it convinced I know not, but it certainly exasperated. The town generally was much amused. St. Werburgh's parish, including the Friargate and Nun's Green, was the quietest and most genteel quarter, and business folks were not displeased to see the rookery set a-cawing. My father received

many compliments. Mr. Lockett, Copley's friend, had been guilty of a little nonchalance, rather than indifference, about the affair, and the Letter had charged him with trifling about the legal question; but he complimented my father on his 'law,' thinking, I am told, that my eldest brother had contributed it.

The curate of St. Peter's, who was the harlequin of this pantomime, took his revenge in a very lengthy lampoon, in ballad style, entitled 'The Funny Book,' which I grieve to say I neither possess nor remember, except that, while there were some good hits in it, the production was hardly becoming a clergyman of high Evangelical pretensions. It was he who some time before this, on the announcement of a performance by a well-known actress, placarded the town with a vulgar and untrue sketch of the lady's history. The singular ecclesiastical structure directly opposite the Infirmary is a monument of his taste.

As to the rest, I have been told that one harmless expression, as I should have thought it, gave more offence than any other. There lived in the Friargate an old gentleman, an octogenarian I think, with his daughter. He was remarkably silent, and never did anything that I could hear of beyond taking his station at his breakfast-room window, and choosing his dinner from the contents of the butcher's shop just within sight. The enemy had laid hold of him, and put him forward as a claimant in some capacity or other. I referred to him as 'a meek old gentleman' who would not have done this spontaneously. As it chanced, the family did not affect meekness, and a whole tribe of them resented the charge. I

was told that if I had called him 'a furious old Turk' they would have been highly gratified.

All this is now of the past. There are now four churches, each with its own district, in this parish alone. There are no pews in St. Werburgh's, only open benches. The several sittings, however, are appropriated by the churchwardens, as the law requires. Time, the great innovator, has done his usual work there in the fabric and in the arrangements. Yet there remain the chancel decorations that were still new when Dr. Johnson was married there, and which to me have a grace beyond the reach of art.

That year, and early that year, I made a solemn resolution that I would never again either say or write a disrespectful word of a Bishop, or disobey a Bishop, whether I thought him right or thought him wrong. I may at times, and on surprise, have been inconsistent, but never to the extent of breaking this resolution. I have frequently been asked of late years what advice I had to offer to the clerical gentlemen and their lay supporters who persist in practices which their Bishops distinctly forbid, and my answer has always been that, as I make it a rule to obey the Bishop myself, I do not see how I can recommend a different course to others. Nevertheless I cannot but be proud of the assistance I rendered my father on this very trying occasion. I have often had to notice the turn given to a man's career by a good stroke of work done for his father. The commencement of General Monk's career, and of the Restoration, has been variously dated. For my part I date it from a very severe thrashing he administered to the under-

sheriff of Devon on the Hoe of Plymouth. The king was coming to Plymouth, and all the gentry were anxious to present themselves. But Monk's father was heavily in debt, and there were writs in the under-sheriff's hands. So he did not venture to show himself. The son went to the under-sheriff, urged the exceptional character of the occasion, and obtained from him a promise not to molest the father during his Majesty's visit. The fellow broke his promise and seized the opportunity to lodge the father in gaol. The next day young Monk, seventeen or so, waited for the man, and thrashed him within an ace of his life. He had to fly, of course, and he entered the Dutch service. There he learnt the arts of policy and of war, which he could never have acquired in his own country—at least, on the royal side. All his education, as Clarendon bitterly said, was Devonshire and Dutch, but it made him the greatest statesman and general of his time.

CHAPTER LXXIX.

THE REPORT OF AN EPISCOPAL COMMISSION.

SINCE I wrote the last chapter my own copy of the Report on St. Werburgh's Pews which I had lost or lent has been kindly replaced. Upon consideration I think the Report so important in the history of Pews, and so honourable to the Bishop, the commissioners, and the churchwardens, that I cannot do

better than give it to my readers. I must beg to remind them that at this date, and for some years after, the claims of prescription and of the merest possession were very strongly maintained, indeed triumphantly in many instances. Whenever lawyers had the least pretence for it they advertised pews as connected with houses, and the transaction once allowed established the claim. The country clergy were naturally unwilling to quarrel with their chief landlord, and his coming tenant; and if they did venture to protest, it was only to find themselves regarded as very troublesome and unneighbourly. Even in high quarters the man who seems to make the quarrel is apt to be regarded with suspicion, be his quarrel ever so just. The comment is that he ought to have managed it in some better way. I give the Report with no alteration, except the substitution of initials for the full names.

REPORT.

THE Commissioners appointed by the Lord Bishop of Lichfield, for the purpose of examining into and deciding upon the Cases of Dispute between the Churchwardens and certain inhabitants of the Parish of St. Werburgh, Derby, do make the following Report of their proceedings :—

The Commissioners, in obedience to his Lordship's directions, have entered upon the investigation, '*de novo*, and without any regard to the previous decisions made' by his Lordship, and in order that the parties interested may know the view taken of their respective cases by the Commissioners, they have thought it right to specify the grounds upon which they have decided in each instance, so that an appeal from their verdict, if erroneous, to a legal tribunal, will be more readily made.

In arbitrating upon an occasion like the present, where the law and its bearings are very imperfectly understood, it became necessary for the Commissioners, after looking into the legal opinions of Sir Herbert Jenner and Dr. Lushington, to lay down for their own guidance the general principles embodied in those opinions; and having done so, they proceeded to bring the several cases, one by one, to the test of those principles, being careful to preserve, as well in their decisions upon the questions of a legal nature, as in those where any latitude of discretion was allowed them, as strict and general a uniformity as possible.

The following points appear to be clearly laid down in the above mentioned opinions:—

1st. That the Parishioners have no power to let or sell their pews.

2nd. That persons having a faculty for a pew, have an exclusive right of occupation; but that the faculty becomes vacated, and the pew reverts to the parishioners at large, by the death or non-residence of the person to whom it was granted; unless the person so dying leaves a widow or descendants, as children, grandchildren, nephews and nieces, residing in the parish, in which several cases they would retain the same exclusive right of occupation as the person to whom the faculty was originally granted; and that the faculty does not revive after it has once been vacated.

3rd. That *mere* possession of a pew, of whatever duration, does not give a title to it, so as to exclude the authority of the Ordinary, to be exercised by the Churchwardens in the first instance, subject to his control.

4th. That the Churchwardens have a discretionary power (subject to the control of the Ordinary) to remove a family from a pew (not appropriated by faculty) upon good grounds, such as non-attendance at Church, diminution of the number of the family, and such other circumstances as may render a new appointment beneficial to the parish at large, and to place that family in other seats more suitable for them.

5th. That when the demand for Church-room becomes urgent, and several sittings in any pew, subject to the control of the Churchwardens, are generally neglected to be occupied by members of the family in possession, or by residents in the parish of proper station, the Churchwardens will be doing their

duty, in permanently filling the vacant seats with residents in the parish of equal station and respectability; but the longer the family has been in uninterrupted possession, the more cautious and circumspect the Churchwardens should be in interfering with them.

6th. That pews cannot be claimed as appurtenant to houses.

Before they announce their final adjudication of the cases submitted to them, the Commissioners must observe that they feel in its full force the heavy responsibility and the arduousness of the task they have undertaken; and knowing that it is his Lordship's intention to confirm their decision, they have entered upon the investigation with the utmost caution and deliberation. For the more dispassionate consideration of the subject, it appeared to the Commissioners that the safest course for them to take, in the first instance, was to obtain from the Churchwardens, and from the several parties whose claims were to be investigated, a statement of their respective cases in writing, and to decline, unless it were found necessary, any personal communication with the parties interested. To this course the Commissioners have adhered, except in one or two instances, where information of a peculiar nature was required, and having on the last day of their sitting deemed it advisable to have an interview with the Churchwardens to elucidate some points which were not clearly understood by them, they finally decided as follows upon the several cases.

Mr. P.'s Pew, No. 4, *North Gallery.*—Awarded to him by the Commissioners, upon the ground of his father having had a faculty for it, which has never been vacated.

Mr. W.'s Pew, No. 13, *South Gallery.*—Awarded to him exclusively, in order to admit his apprentices; the Commissioners being of opinion that they should not be separated from their master's family. The Commissioners think it right to observe, that the ground of the claim advanced by Mr. W. to this pew—viz. that of 'its belonging to his house'—is untenable, although, upon general grounds, they think he has a fair claim to the pew in question.

Mrs. H.'s Pew.—Not being occupied by herself or her family, reverts to the Churchwardens.

Mrs. U., No. 19, *Middle Aisle.*—To have two sittings and priority; the others at the disposal of the Churchwardens.

Mrs. U., No. 20, *North Gallery.*—To have three sittings and priority; the others at the disposal of the Churchwardens, but only in case of urgent necessity. It appears that her family have been in uninterrupted occupation for forty years.

Mr. W.—His family and apprentices to take the pew lately occupied by Mr. D.

Mr. F. to remain where he is now placed; the remaining seats at the disposal of the Churchwardens.

Mr. F., No. 9, *North Gallery.*—To retain possession of his pew for the accommodation of his family and his clerks. The claim which he has advanced, of its being 'appurtenant to his house,' is untenable, although upon general grounds the Commissioners think he has a fair claim to it.

Dr. B.'s Pew, No. 8, *North Gallery.*—Awarded to him, as adapted to his station and to the number and circumstances of his family.

Miss T. and Miss P.—To have the choice of No. 2 or 3 in the North Gallery. To have two sittings in that pew; the remaining ones at the disposal of the Churchwardens in case of urgent necessity. The faculty under which Miss T. claims appears to have been vacated by the death of Mrs. H. Miss T. not being the niece of *Mr.* H., the person to whom the faculty was granted, and therefore not a descendant of *his* family, the Commissioners are of opinion that Miss T. cannot claim any exclusive privilege under the faculty. Taking, however, all the circumstances of this case into their earnest consideration, more particularly the great length of time Miss T. and her connections have uninterruptedly occupied one of these pews, the Commissioners think the Churchwardens will judge wisely in not placing any strangers in the pew they fix upon, unless the demand for sittings for persons of suitable station should be so great as to render such a step imperatively necessary.

Mr. B. to take the pew not selected by Miss T. and Miss P., it being adapted to his station and to the number and circumstances of his family. Had Mrs. W. surrendered to her relative, Mr. B., the pew No. 8, which she now claims for him, there would have been a strong ground for his continuing in possession of it; but as she constantly let it to other persons (which she was supposed at that time to be entitled to do), and

he has never made use of it, the Commissioners, under all the circumstances, do not think it expedient to incur the difficulties of making any other arrangement.

Mr. S. to return to the pew from whence he was originally removed. The pew claimed by Mr. S. in the North Gallery is clearly at the disposal of the Churchwardens, and the Commissioners hope they have used a sound discretion in placing Mr. B. there.

Mrs. F., No. 7, North Gallery.—The Commissioners do not feel themselves at liberty, in conformity with her request, to allot to her any more sittings in this pew than are necessary for herself and her family; but whilst Mrs. F. fills the pew, as she now does, with residents in the parish of proper station and respectability the Churchwardens will judge properly not to exercise their authority in this instance.

Mr. B. to have a suitable pew of five or six sittings allotted to him.

Mrs. H.—The faculty under which Mrs. H. claims has been long vacated by her non-residence in the parish some years since. The Commissioners allot two sittings in this pew to Mrs. H. and her daughter. As Mrs. H. generally fills her pew appropriately, the Commissioners think the Churchwardens will judge properly not to interfere with her.

Mr. S., No. 12, South Gallery.—The Commissioners allot two sittings in this seat to Mr. S. The rest to be at the disposal of the Churchwardens. The Commissioners consider that Mr. S.'s claim, founded upon the fact of his having purchased this pew, and also upon its having always been occupied with his house, is untenable. Mr. S. has occupied the pew in question twelve years, but the Commissioners do not think (when the number of his family is considered) that this claim is of sufficient weight to entitle him to the exclusive occupation of it.

Mr. W. to be restored, with his family, to the free pew in the North Aisle.

The Commissioners cannot close their Report without expressing their belief that the grievous dissensions which have prevailed in consequence of the new appropriation of seats in St. Werburgh's Church have arisen from a combination of circumstances which are not likely to occur again. The novelty

of the interference of Churchwardens in such matters; the supposed invasion of vested rights; the want of sufficient information as to the state of the law upon these questions; and the general ignorance of the discretionary powers reposed in the Churchwardens, have contributed to this effect. But when a short time shall have elapsed, and the parties shall have become more familiar with these points, the Commissioners confidently hope that the attachment which they all appear to bear to the established Church will induce them to make some sacrifice of their private feelings to the public welfare; and, moreover, when they shall have considered that the want of sufficient accommodation in some Churches, and the too exclusive appropriation of large pews in them to a comparatively small number of persons, and to the manifest deprivation of residents of equal respectability in the same parish, have gone very far to alienate the minds of individuals from the Church, and to cause them to seek the more equal accommodation which is readily offered them in dissenting places of worship, the Commissioners earnestly hope, that although some of the inhabitants of St. Werburgh may have incurred a present loss by the new appropriation, and their ancient prepossessions may have been somewhat assailed, they will nevertheless, ere long, rejoice that their friends and neighbours are now possessing suitable accommodation in their parish Church, and will feel that those nicer shades of distinction which must ever characterise the worldly stations of mankind should not be too closely scrutinised in the House of God.

HENRY WILMOT.
HENRY R. CREWE.
JOHN HARRISON.

Sanctioned by me,
May 9, 1831,
H. LICH. and COV.

CHAPTER LXXX.

CHRISTIAN JOURNALISM.

BEFORE I finish these volumes I have much to say that would be presumptuous in anybody, but even worse than presumptuous in any one who, after undertaking to preach and administer the Word of God, had palpably and exceptionally taken up with another employment. I have to meet a prejudice. I have been described recently as 'above all things a journalist,' and I feel I have to thank the author of this expression for conceding that I may have been something else also, though in some lesser degree. The truth is that, although I may have been rather multifarious, I have been above all things a parson.

I cannot claim in a high degree the important elements of simplicity, purpose, attention, and concentration. I am not exceptionally single-minded, or single-eyed, or single-hearted. Newman used to say that all the Thomases were double-minded, or two-fold. All are claimed by two sides. The Apostle is claimed alike by believer and rationalist; Thomas à Kempis by all schools of devotion, indeed by all the Churches; Thomas à Becket was both a great layman and a great Churchman, going beyond bounds probably in both capacities. Thomas Aquinas I cannot pretend to know much of, but I believe he occupies a mid-position in theology, and a certain manuscript upon his 'Catena' by my brother James, if it exists, is still, like the body of Patroclus, the subject of contention. Thomas More, Thomas Wolsey,

Thomas Cromwell, and perhaps I may even throw in Thomas Moore, all presented both a political and theological face to the world, though, it must be allowed, with various degrees of merit and propriety. Shall I add a certain Thomas Lamb, who, under the better known name of Masaniello, made a revolution at Naples, and had command of the city, but not of himself, for some twelve or thirteen days?

What can possess Christian parents to give so fatal a name? But we cannot prevent being double in some degree, for we must combine two natures and characters primarily, and by the laws of heredity many more. Physiologists tell us no two sides of a human being quite agree. Meditations are but inward conversations between at least two parties in our little state. Vitality is an intermittent and circulating power, and it quickens first one part of our nature, then another. In fine, when people talk of double-mindedness, let them please to remember that they live in glass houses.

But it always has been thought advisable, and certainly it is the universal practice, for the clergy to combine other studies and employments with the care of a parish. The very rare exceptions that I have known prove the rule, for in every case the clergyman would have been wiser and happier, perhaps better too, if he had done something else besides preaching, teaching, and praying after his fashion. It is all very well for great dignitaries to charge the clergy to stick to their proper duties and permit no distraction, but these gentlemen should remember their own case is very different from that of a poor man tied to a

stake by a tether a mile or two long, in the midst of a very simple and unlearned population.

Casting my eyes over all the country clergy I have known, I note that some have gardened, some have farmed, some have roamed about the country, acquiring much knowledge of their own neighbourhood and the world generally; some have gone into society, dividing their time between their own parish and fashionable resorts; some have been good modern linguists; some have been scientific, and have made curious experiments—here and there I have known a clerical astronomer; some have studied Hebrew, as I was told to do by Bishop Burgess; some have gone into horses, and even on the 'turf'; some into cage-birds; a small percentage have gone into book-collecting, a greater number have written and published; some have hunted, shot, or fished; some have boldly plunged into local politics, becoming guardians of the poor and magistrates; some have taken to topography and antiquities; some have found sufficient diversion in quarrels with their squires, their neighbours, or their own relatives.

The instruction of a family, the management of a school, and even the necessity of finding topics of general interest for the rural circle, compel some variety of occupation. The spiritual bow cannot be always tight-strung. I find, as a fact, that much as people will always value and respect spiritual converse, and disposed as they are to note the absence of it, they nevertheless get tired of a man who has nothing to say on any other subject, and who seems wholly of another world. They feel themselves, too,

rather snubbed when they have introduced some topic of present, though secular, interest, and find themselves immediately warned off that track.

But there is no book that so combines affairs human and divine, earthly and heavenly, as the Bible. A serious attempt to master it involves everything that can be called literature. All the deeply interesting questions of history, chronology, geography, ethnology, language, philosophy, manners and customs, morality, and the beginnings and endings of the human race, are presented to us in rapid succession as we turn over the sacred page, pressing for solution with a force which chides our idle incuriousness. The insolence of neologians and sceptics, and the wrath of bigots, alike testify to the multitude of the questions that have provoked the collision. Even with no helps the Bible is an encyclopædia, and a man who reads it carefully will learn more of human affairs than he will from any other book that could be named.

People sometimes amuse one another by asking what one book, or what three books, or what half dozen books, they would most desire to save from shipwreck on a desert island, or take with them to life imprisonment. In every selection I have found the Bible comes first, even when the selectors think they have religious knowledge enough for their salvation, or even don't think religious knowledge has much to do with the matter. The last forty years have brought out in a wonderful manner that the minor topics of the Bible, its earthly surroundings, its vulgar condescensions, its husk of secular appendages,

are the strong outworks of revelation. The awful fact that a man may be a wonderful Biblical scholar, and even a learned and ingenious theologian, without being a Christian, proves at least the powerful claims, the wonderful fascination, which the Book has for all orders of minds.

But this multifariousness, this mixture of the human with the divine element, runs through all the personages in the sacred history, and all their careers. As a matter of course this is true of patriarchs, deliverers, lawgivers, judges, and kings; but it is not less true of the prophets. Every one of them handled boldly what may be called the burning questions of social and political controversy. It would be tedious to enumerate all, and to prove this assertion beyond cavil. It is true the occasions and the missions of some of the prophets were to protest and warn against idolatry and the general unfaithfulness of God's people. But it must be allowed that they felt no scruple against denouncing the deeds, the practices, and the laws which in our own days justly provoke popular indignation, and create needless collisions between the many and the strong.

The Fathers of the Church, and the other prominent names in ecclesiastical history—that is, in the formation of our Creed—are very properly invested with a supernatural lustre. But a considerable number of them had made their mark in the world as clever politicians, able administrators, and the leaders of parties, before they were bishops, some before they were even baptised.

I was myself always a reader of newspapers. In

our house at Charterhouse we took in two daily papers, one on each side, and several Sunday papers. I must remind my readers that in those days newspapers were very small, and that they cost sevenpence, never a farthing less. I believe I allowed the 'Morning Herald' to form my opinions. About that time I urged upon my brother John, just entering his father's business, the opening there was for a second newspaper in Derbyshire. He and my father thought the county too small, too poor, or too mean-spirited to support more than one. I am afraid to say how many it supports now. Later on I was often moved in some matter or other, only to find myself powerless. Hence my longing for an 'organ.'

Since writing these words, I read in Mr. Ornsby's 'Memoirs of James R. Hope-Scott,' that in 1839, when I had been two years at Cholderton, there was a chance of this ambition being unexpectedly gratified. The biographer mentions a letter of Hope's relating to a plan for having articles on Church subjects published in the 'Morning Post,' which had been showing itself more kindly disposed than the rest of the newspaper press to the Oxford views. 'The editorship of that journal,' the biographer proceeds, 'had recently changed hands, Mr. Praed having just resigned; and I believe an effort was made to place it in the hands of the Rev. Thomas Mozley, brother-in-law of Mr. Newman, but this does not appear in the correspondence.'

Nothing is more likely than that some effort was made, but I never heard of it before, and can

only amuse myself by speculating on its possible results. At the date of Hope's letter I had not yet begun, or even contemplated, the rebuilding of Cholderton Church, and there would have been no reason, or excuse, for retaining the living. I should probably have accepted the offer as I should the command of the Channel Fleet. I should certainly have proved myself unequal to the first duties of an editor. Old newspapers are not so easily wrecked as new quarterlies, so I might only have furnished an amusing episode in the history of the 'Morning Post'; but no doubt the crew that overpowered the captain of the 'British Critic' would have done the same in any case. And then where should I have been?

I have already mentioned ('Reminiscences,' vol. ii. p. 172) my indignation—more, I might have called it—at the very harsh treatment of some of my poor parishioners under the operation of the New Poor Law. I was just then invited by Archdeacon Lear to preach a sermon at his Salisbury visitation. I was then too full of this matter to give much attention to another, and I accordingly preached on 'The Church the True Guardian of the Poor,' taking for my text Matthew xxv. 40. Many of my expressions were very strong. The Archdeacon was a good, and wise, and kind man. As I walked by his side up to the luncheon rooms, after the visitation, he observed in a grave and gentle tone, 'Mr. Mozley, your sermon was a very injudicious one.'

I daresay it was. It lies before me, but I don't care to read it over to see how far it deserved the censure. I could not now answer for every word,

but I am pretty sure that there is nothing in it that most of the Minor Prophets might not have said under the same circumstances, no doubt in a more solemn and awful tone. But the politics of the Salisbury neighbourhood were then ruled by Lord Radnor, who, as all the world knows, was, in a line of his own, the very counterpart of his cousin Dr. Pusey.

At the luncheon I had the formal thanks of the clergy for my sermon, but I remember I was so struck down I could not rise from my seat to acknowledge them. This was before I had the least thought of ever contributing to either review or journal; and when in fact I was still under engagement to contribute both 'Vincent of Lerins' and 'Origen contra Celsum' to the Library of the Fathers. It was seven years before I wrote what is called a 'leader.' But the reception of my sermon set me upon an inquiry which, as it seemed hopeless of results, could be nothing but pain. The Church then, I said—the Church which calls itself the Kingdom of Heaven, the Church of the Bible, of the Prophets, of the Apostles and early Fathers—the Church of all ages, has nothing to say to the rich and poor, to public justice and mercy, to the spirit of our legislation, to the union of hearts and minds embracing all classes and conditions. All this it leaves to the world.

But as the occasion remains, for the poor will always be in the land, so the duty to the poor still remains. There must be those who can speak for them, and consult, too, for the improvement of their condition. No one can ever think over this duty without coming to understand that it is a wide duty,

and covers much ground. I came reluctantly and slowly to the conclusion, to which I still adhere, and which I desire to leave to those who come after me, that in this country the Press must be regarded as an indispensable supplement of the Pulpit.

If it is necessary, and perhaps it is, to prescribe narrow lines to the official preachers of the Established Church, and to enforce on them that even the Bible is too large a field, and too free a field, for such as they to ramble over, then it is plain the Word of God requires other exponents than parish priests, and other modes of utterance than official sermons.

If, too, it is often an acknowledged necessity that a clergyman combine other occupations with his strictly clerical function, then I ask what worthier, what fitter, what more in keeping with a sacred office, and a message from Heaven for the promotion of universal peace and good-will, than contributing to journals bound by every motive and every pledge to forward alike the true interests of the Church and of the secular common weal. Of course any one who does this will find himself accused from time to time of subordinating divine truth to political considerations. He writes this, or that, it will be said, at the dictation of a political chief, or of a Parliamentary majority, or a godless people.

But who are they that make these wanton charges? Who are they that in their own organs are continually alluding to writers whom they charge, not with untruth, not with unwisdom, but with writing contrary to their own convictions, and being slaves even in the cause of their country, and—for it is not ex-

pressly denied, in the cause of their Church also? They are the men who are all the time cultivating the dispensers of power in the present or in the future; jointing themselves to the most promising politicians of the day; gathering round the centres of golden expectations, unable to contain their joy when they hear that their names are down in some list for promotion, unable to conceal their jealousy of rivals in that race. Certainly if the world is to be for ever governed by a motley crew of Herodians, Pharisees, Sadducees, and Scribes, they are wise in their generation, and it is with a true instinct that they resolutely repel the intrusion of the Divine Law, whether of works or of grace, into the conduct of human affairs.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

MODERN MANICHÆANISM.

FOR the greater part of my life, indeed till very recently, I have been sensible of a certain dogmatic prejudice, amounting to a positive condemnation, against even a Christian layman taking any serious and deliberate part in human affairs. This has pursued me in many forms, wherever I have been, and whatever I was doing. It had its basis in a still more comprehensive anathema. In early life I heard the frequent reiteration of the doctrine that the whole world lay in darkness, that human nature was wholly corrupt, that there was no safety, true life or real

existence, except in some recondite notions and inner sensations. A man might be the very model of what are commonly esteemed virtues, whether in public or in private life; he might make the greatest sacrifices for the good of his country and for the moral improvement of those about him, and yet be all the time theologically a reprobate, a miserable creature, the foredoomed heir of eternal perdition.

This idea of things as they are, and of 'the world,' was much favoured and substantiated by what I used to hear at the same time from a very different quarter. The people who did not believe in Christ at all, or who only believed in Him as they would in Howard the philanthropist, or in Dr. Priestley, were also frequently found to be deeply impressed with the utter wickedness of the world, especially of all the existing organisations for its government or its improvement. Believers and non-believers were wonderfully agreed in their estimate of that merely practical and respectable goodness which does its part, and hands over its work, not the worse, even if not the better, to the next generation.

Such notions are an atmosphere, which you may struggle against, but cannot help breathing. You may exhale it, but you must inhale it, and something must remain in you. When the belief exists in many forms you only shake off one to find yourself under another. It is projected upon the imagination from undeniable facts, and you walk as in a bog, not knowing whether your next step will be on solid ground, or into an abyss. The world does, of course, there is no denying it, present at once the ideas of a

glorious elevation and of an utter abasement, a city of God and of a self-made Hell. It is pervaded by all the elements of corruption. It will never be what it conceivably might have been, and might still be.

But what I am now speaking of hardly admitted of a better or a worse; it did not allow of any good at all, except that which was technically, scientifically, and dogmatically good. The better people might seem, without the regular brand, the worse they were really. Goodness, of course, was not in the thing done—that had long been ruled by heathen as well as Christian philosophers. It could be only in the doer. To this it was added that any one pretending to be good, or trying to be good, must produce his certificate, and prove that he was not infringing upon a monopoly. There really prevailed an idea that goodness, in the merely moral sense, was worse than badness, as being more responsible for being what it was and no more. Hence the saying that 'the greater the sinner the greater the saint,' and the extreme desire in some quarters to make out that St. Paul had been what is commonly understood by a very wicked man.

I am too well aware that our Thirty-nine Articles encourage this sort of talk, but I find it hard to think of them as a living form. All sides subjected public men, public measures, public policies, to a dogmatic test, as if they were essentially bad in themselves, and only redeemed by a certain profession, which, upon the very supposition, had nothing to do with goodness.

I have delivered myself freely about the Evan-

gelicals ; but I must do them the justice to say that High Church, and indeed all the Churches, so it seemed to me, were much the same in this matter. Philanthropy, and all policy of a philanthropic character, especially in the way of common justice or natural kindness, were so suspected at Oxford in my younger days, so sneered at, so scouted rather, that one began to feel it the greatest of crimes to be kind, useful, and good to one's fellow-creatures in any general way. For Churchpeople it was the most perilous of all courses, for it yoked them with unbelievers, and exposed them to defilement on all sides.

It was generally assumed, and persistently maintained for many years of my long experience, that the support of a wise and generous policy in public affairs constituted a fair presumption that the writer had renounced the Christian faith. I have mentioned that at a very early age, indeed before I had got into my teens, I had been imbued by one of my Derby instructors with some economic and progressive ideas. But besides battling much about their practical execution, I think I regarded them as barely compatible with the true Christian faith as I had received it, and if I held them it was almost by stealth. How was it possible to improve a thing utterly bad upon its own lines ? That might well be asked ; but the question was rather—How was it possible to improve so bad a thing as the world on any lines at all? Was not the world simply to be renounced, or let alone altogether ?

Yet it often occurred to me as rather an incon-

sistency that I should use and enjoy, with such entire satisfaction, all the good things this wicked world had done and was doing for me, and which I expected it still to do during its brief respite from impending perdition. I thought of the good houses it built for me, the wholesome and pleasant meat and drink it brought me, the comfortable clothing it made for me, the good roads it laid out for me, the conveyances it placed at my disposal, and the fund of amusement it provided for me. Could I have no better wish than to send all these things and their makers to the Devil from whom they had come?

I remember, long before I was out of my teens, having occasion to find out something about the Manichæans, said to be a detestable heresy. I was startled to find, if not agreement, yet a manifest parallelism between some of their doctrines and those current all around me. They believed in an evil spirit, a spirit of darkness, malice, envy, and all wickedness, existent presumably before creation, who had made this world, and the whole universe—for they go together. On this theory our own dispensation is the invasion of this dark realm by the Spirit of Light and Goodness. The original, the party in possession, is in this view wholly bad, and there can be no recognition of existing goodness and truth, because there is none, and everything that is done for such a world, on its own lines, must be as bad as the world itself, altogether bad. You may apply much industry and invention to mud, but you cannot build a marble palace out of it.

I felt at times there could not be much substantial

difference between the Manichæan view of this world and that which High and Low held, with some trifling differences. The simple fact that you could not drain, or sweeten, or light up a town, or open a reading-room, without shaking hands with Dissenters and worse, was enough to warn you off that road.

It became a very serious question how such ideas could possibly take root and rise up and fill the land, and how the regular operations of human industry, which the Hebrew poets could unreservedly class with the grandest works of God, could ever be regarded as bad to their very heart and grain, good for nothing—in the theological sense, detestable. Has not the interposition of an utterly unintelligible dogmatism between the word of God and the heart of man much to do with this? It has always been observed that dogma has a tendency to dissociate religion from humanity, justice, and truth. The dogma itself has no moral significance or direct moral bearing. It is a proposition about incomprehensibles, consequently itself incomprehensible; it is a proposition without human bearings, consequently leaving man out of the question. To believe it, at least to maintain it, is the one thing needful.

You may be playing a simply worldly game; you may be cruel, greedy, avaricious, and extortionate; you may be accumulating a huge fortune; you may be pandering to power for place, rank, titles, and dignities; yet, if you can but pronounce this talisman, whenever called upon, you are right, you are good, you are on the safe side for ever. If you cannot: if you do but falter, or so much as try to reduce what

you profess to a reasonable form, then no virtue whether of saint or of hero will so much as take you out of the category of the utterly and unredeemably bad. There you are, and must remain.

I do not think I have overstated what I must call the prevailing error. What wonder is it if the sense of morality has become dim, if the Redeemer Himself has receded from the human eye, if His gracious words are well-nigh forgotten, if the Spirit of Holiness and Goodness is rather banned away than allowed to strive with man, if evil in these days is called good, and good evil, if the churl is called liberal, and the liberal a churl?

CHAPTER LXXXII.

A SUSPECT.

THUS for a time, I could not say how long, I was myself deeply infected, rather than quite possessed, with these morbid sentiments and these gloomy conceptions. All the world was utterly and hopelessly bad, and there remained only two objects respectively adapted to our spiritual aspirations and our mortal exigencies. On the one hand, we—that is, they who had souls, and knew it—had to save some select principles and some still more select articles of faith. On the other hand, we—that is, all who had the requisite energy and common sense—had to get as much out of the wreck as possible.

As these two objects may be regarded as very

dissimilar and even antagonistic, to associate them, and to refer them to the same moral and theological source, may be thought a paradox, perhaps even a satire; but it is a flagrant and undeniable fact that 'spirituality' and worldliness are alike fostered by a contempt and hatred of humanity. This indeed is the very reason why they are so often found in the most exaggerated forms in the same individual.

If to the first of the above objects—that is, the rescue of certain principles and articles of faith—I add the salvation of a few select souls, and the condemnation of the rabble of humanity, the former for an undefined happiness, the latter to an eternal and sharply defined misery, this will be pronounced an unexceptionable, indeed orthodox creed.

But as salvation and condemnation are hazy matters, a long way off, and very capable of being taken up and laid down at convenience, I leave them out of the present review, which relates generally to the prevailing idea of things as they are in this visible world. If history is to teach us, the only really catholic faith of all ages and countries is that mankind generally have no claim to our love, our respect, or our honour, that we owe them neither justice nor mercy. The utter wretchedness and degradation of man's state has always been a fertile theme with theologians, and they have been glad to find what they regard as a necessary article of faith corroborated by the admissions or effusions of poets, satirists, and philosophers.

They have even more allies perhaps than they are generally aware of. All the conquerors and con-

quering races of antiquity believed themselves to be a select, enlightened, and civilised few, in a world of barbarism out of the pale of right humanity. All that they had to do was to destroy, or reduce to slavery, the various wild growths of savage nature about them. In one form or other the sentiment—that is, this want of a proper human sentiment—survives. But it is utilised, it is coined, it enters into calculations and accounts, it becomes a sort of property, a negotiable commodity. The fact that the great majority of mankind are good-for-nothing, and have no claim upon you, not even the claim to be let alone, is pleasant, and gainful; and when, as is generally the case, it acquires a religious sanction, then it is all that could be desired, and makes you at once a saint, a philosopher, a man of business, and a man of the world. It leaves you perfectly free to act for your own advantage.

There was a time in our history when, whether it were war or whether it were peace, an English merchant-ship spying a Spanish ship on the main, instantly gave chase, and, if successful, murdered every soul of the Spanish crew, and carried off the ship and cargo as a lawful prize. Such was the feeling of the better classes in this country when I went to Charterhouse in 1820. Most of my schoolfellows had to fight their way to public office, to good pay in the 'Company's' service, to military rank, to one of the prizes of the Church, and there was a very strong feeling, amounting to a social law, against any alteration that might diminish the number or the value of these lawful preys.

A reformer was a heartless pretender who hated those about him, while he affected the welfare of those whom he only knew of in the mass. Grant that the world was bad and in a bad condition. The worse it was, the better it was for those who had to fight their way in it. Theologians, Tories, aspirants and adventurers, younger sons, and all compelled by circumstances to plan a golden future, believing the world to be bad, wished it no better. Reformers and philanthropists were poachers in fact, disturbing the game, even if they did not always secure it for themselves.

No social alliance known in history was so strong as that which then existed between Tories, High Churchmen, land-owners, slave-owners, and monopolists. It resembled nothing so much as that alleged to exist occasionally between some out-of-the-way Bishop in the Archipelago, and his brother, or cousin, who returns every now and then from a cruise loaded with spoil, with which he exercises hospitality all round the family circle.

At the bottom of the theory was the admission that the world was bad; its people were bad; their ways were bad; and the worst of all were those who tried to mend them, or to redress public wrongs. Nothing was thought more monstrous than the attempt to combine the social improvement of the people with the performance of ministerial duties. The Dissenting ministers made the attempt; but they were altogether on the wrong tack, and nothing they did could make them right. If they did good, it was for spite. But what good could be done to the

world, and who but an impostor could pretend to do it any good? A 'political' clergyman was an object of horror in those days; but the stigma was not extended to those who fought for things as they were, it only applied to those who desired some change for the better.

I have been myself under this reproach for a large part of my life. Before I finish this volume no doubt some of my readers will say that I have fully justified it. That summary judgment I must anticipate. I must show that I have as much right to my say on the matters which concern our salvation as most people have. With professional and official theologians I cannot compare, and have indeed no wish to compare. They are so roundabout, and so shy of the point really at issue. I claim to be heard as a clergyman who has done his duty about as well as most other clergymen. I have had the charge of rural parishes for nearly thirty years, those, too, rather isolated, and under circumstances to throw all the work and all the costs on myself.

For most of the time, indeed I think I may say all the time, I have had other work, for I cannot remember a day in my whole life in which I had not a task in hand under more or less pressure in regard to time. In this respect I have been like some aged labourers who have told me they had never known what it was not to have a day's work to do. But I have always made a point of doing some parish duty, and even when I was away for a few days I gave to my poor people the morning of my departure and the afternoon of my return. It was often what people

call 'high drive.' I know I neglected other duties as incumbent on me as school superintendence or pastoral visitation, but my parish was always my first and last thought.

Then why give up my parishes? It was not quite of my own accord that I gave up Moreton Pinckney, and I actually held it till I had accepted Cholderton. My readers must bear with me. The question is how far I am entitled to speak of such an awful matter as the Faith of a Christian, and the special dogma round which the storms of controversy have most raged in all countries and times. Have I forfeited my natural right?

I have already told the story, that is, some of the story, of Cholderton Church. It has added to my stock of sympathies, for I never hear of any one, especially if he have a spiritual character and functions, committing himself, or being committed, to the building of a church without the profoundest pity. In my case it came to this, that I had no choice but to accept the proffered means of finishing my church, so as they were compatible with my profession, as I believed, and still believe and maintain, that they were. I spent on that village and church a greater amount of literary earnings than were ever before spent in so obscure a spot and so humble a community. I loved my people and my work. But it was a continual fight with all sorts of difficulties, involving some unpleasantly exact calculations of the months and days constituting legal residence. When, for example, my dear father died in August, 1845, and I had to go to Derby, both then and afterwards

I felt much ashamed of myself for having to put the case to my Bishop and ask his permission to exceed my already exhausted power of non-residence.

There came then to me once or twice a very good and kind gentleman, but a very fussy one, and very fond of lighting upon some matter to make a talk and a stir about. This was Frank Dyson. There must be some people old enough to remember his visits to Winchester, where he used to button-hole people at any hour in the morning, and not release them till past lunch-time. I think it was the dean who once walked in late to lunch, and explained that he had been in F. Dyson's custody for four hours. He had no official relation to me. He held both Tidworths, the one in Salisbury diocese, and the other in Winchester; but he was rural dean in the latter only. However, in the kindest way he observed upon my movements to and fro, and I could not but feel it.

There were other reasons, apart from my occupations, which I felt made it desirable another should take my place, especially as I was certain to have a successor taking a sympathetic view of my difficulties. So I resigned Cholderton. No act of my life gave me so much pain, or more suggested the feeling of suicide. As I signed the document I said to myself that should any living of equal value be offered to me I should immediately accept it. None was offered, and ten thousand times have I repeated to myself the old warning *Cave de resignationibus.* I have related above how I wished to have the offer of Twerton, and how disappointed I was when Buckle was persuaded to withdraw his refusal. It was a bitter dis-

appointment to my wife, and I really think it hastened her end.

During the ensuing sixteen years I frequently took duty, sole charge as well as Sunday duty, sometimes for long spells, and it several times occurred that I officiated as a clergyman for a longer portion of the year than many clergymen evidently think enough to constitute 'residence.'

I may add that both during my thirty years of actual incumbency or sole charge, and my twenty years of intermittent clerical work, I have been continually in contact with Churchmen of all kinds, Dissenters of different degrees, and others taking a serious interest in theological questions. I humbly submit that I have done nothing to forfeit my right to speak upon these questions. Men are held qualified to speak in a high tone of spiritual authority who have never had charge of a parish, never conversed with a poor man on the matter of his faith, never taught in a village school, never attended a labourer's deathbed, and have never been forced to review the grounds on which the Church of England repels a moiety, it may be said, of its inherited and legitimate flock, and drives them into various forms of dissent.

The mere mention of Dissenters will put me out of court in the estimation of many whom I love and esteem. 'What have we to do with Dissenters? If they cannot even agree with one another, how will they ever agree with that which differs from all of them? It was their own doing that they left us. They will never return to us, nor can we ever follow them Above all things they hate compromise as much as

we do ourselves. Such breaches are irreparable. Time only widens and multiplies them. Heresy and schism are a perpetual deterioration.' All this I seem to hear. But even if I grant that there is too much justification in facts for despairing of unity, and even of a better insight into truth, I cannot admit that any number or gravity of facts dispenses with the continual necessity for examining our own foundation, and the controversy between us and all who differ from us sincerely and honestly. Of course, once Dissenters, they become rivals and imitators. They become even more exclusive than the Established Church, even more tyrannical, even more dogmatical, for they have to prove themselves as good theologians, better indeed than we are. But any controversy with Dissenters, based upon the existing state of affairs and the latest utterances, can only lead to useless and endless provocation. We are bound to trace the bitter waters of strife to the *fons et origo mali.* What is it? Well, no doubt there will always be rebellion in the heart of man. The question as regards ourselves is, 'Are we faultless? Is the blame entirely on the side of those who have left us, and have they nothing to say for themselves?'

I cannot myself say that the Church of England is blameless, or the Dissenters without a cause. What have we of the Church, that is, our forefathers of the Church, done? We have set up a dogma, it may be said, ostentatiously, not to say maliciously, utterly impossible to be understood, conceived, or even imagined. We have set up a definition of the Deity we

worship, compared with which every heathen, pagan, or barbaric conception of God is simple and rational. The Almighty evidently invites us in Nature and in Revelation. We obstruct the approaches to Him with a tremendous artifice of theological engineering. Our children ask for nourishment according to their years, and from their infancy we force into their mouth a dreadful mass of stone, scorpion, and viper—an impossible creed, to be swallowed at peril of eternal damnation.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

MR. GEORGE SPENCER.

MR. GEORGE SPENCER was a considerable factor in my education, and consequently of my being. I owe to him much for good or for ill—more, I hope and believe, for good than for ill. I must attempt to do justice to him, though I cannot expect quite to satisfy his son, or even myself, or, after that confession, my readers. He was a tall, spare, upright figure, more decidedly good-looking than my clerical friend James Dean, of about the same build, with the tight-fitting blue frock-coat of the period. With the advantage of such a figure and of an equable movement, he could not appear in a street without everybody in it becoming immediately sensible of the fact. We used to set him down as the same age as my mother, which would make him about thirty-five at the time of our first acquaintance. He had been then long engaged

in giving private lessons to families in writing, arithmetic, and mathematics.

There was a very great want of educational means in those days, as appears from the fact of Mr. Higginson, one of the leading members of Derby society, teaching writing and arithmetic, without mathematics, but with the smallest possible modicum of Latin. Mr. Spencer gave his lessons at most of the good houses in the town and neighbourhood. Mrs. Samuel Rickards—to whom, with her husband, I have given two chapters in my former 'Reminiscences'—a daughter of Sir Robert Wilmot, of Cluddesdon, had been one of his pupils, and I used to compare recollections with her. Everybody liked him ; but all the elders made the same remark, which was that Mr. Spencer discussed speculative questions instead of giving the whole, or the most of his attention to teaching. Not that I ever heard any complaint as to the results.

Mr. Spencer first came to us occasionally in 1818, after the departure of our last governess, and regularly from the beginning of 1819, upon my eldest sister going to school. During these two years I was at Mr. Higginson's, and had no occasion to be present at Mr. Spencer's visits—I was indeed an intruder, but it was always a treat to have a talk with him, all the more if there was some disagreement. In the Bartholomew holidays of 1821 or 1822, I went regularly to his house for lessons in Euclid, and learnt the two first books, I may almost say, better than anything I have learnt in my life. It was not till 1824 that, upon a rising complaint that no mathematics were taught at Charterhouse, the youngest of the masters, fresh

from Cambridge, had a class for those who wished to join it.

In the lessons at home my recollection of Mr. Spencer is that he was a patient listener as well as a good talker, and that I never noticed any want of variety in his topics. These were ethical and political speculations. When Mr. Spencer, with his wife, joined our large family circle in the evening, his talk was perhaps more broken and desultory, as tea-table talk is apt to be. We very early came to the conclusion that Mr. Spencer had chosen his employment, which might be pleasant, but could not be very remunerative, as the only possible means of disseminating his philosophy. He had something to preach, and there was no other way to preach it.

Finding, too, that he never joined in public worship, and that he spent the Sunday in country walks, I concluded that he tried field preaching—commoner in those days than now, when there are so many chapels of one sort or another. Some years later I found this was quite a mistake, and I then saw that if he talked to rustics as he talked to us, they would have stared and gaped at him for ten minutes and walked away. I also, inevitably as I thought, came to the conclusion that Mr. Spencer had no religion in the sense I then attached to that word. I don't remember liking him the less for it, or respecting him the less; indeed, I am often told that orthodox people much prefer absolute unbelief to self-sown churches and spurious orthodoxy. There were then not a few at Derby who neither by word nor act made an outward show of any special religious faith, though they were respectable men, and even favourites.

In this matter I used an expression in my former 'Reminiscences' to which Mr. Herbert Spencer has taken an exception, the precise nature of which I cannot be sure of. In a passage which has given some offence to others as well, I had observed that 'Truth was not in those days the supreme object of contention between any two Churches, or between the Church of England and the Dissenters generally.' By this I meant that loyalty to the Church was the prevailing sentiment, and not any anxiety to know the very truth. I had instanced my various Unitarian and Dissenting teachers and friends. I see myself nothing to recall in the argument. The more dogmatic, superstitious, and exclusive Churches are, the more do they appeal to loyalty, and not to any supposed hunger and thirst for truth. Their language is, 'Indulge in what speculations you like, but render us your allegiance, and march under our colours.' I concluded with instancing, among our teachers and friends, Mr. George Spencer, whom I described as 'a strenuous upholder of truth, justice, and purity, but without any faith or religion whatever, as far as one could see.'

Mr. Herbert Spencer objects to these words. I really think that if he had objected that truth, justice, and purity, and a life spent, with some sacrifice, in inculcating them, was itself a religion in effect, and not without a form, being indeed a presence and a power in a great town, I should have felt very much moved, even though unable to see my way to any truer expression of my meaning. I was speaking from my recollections. Mr. George Spencer observed

no visible form; he avowed no doctrines except those of a purely moral or philosophical character, and either by word or by a significant silence protested against all known methods of expressing a special religious faith. I don't think my words above quoted mean more than this.

There is no word about which there has been more controversy than 'religion.' It greatly puzzled the Roman philosophers and grammarians. The nature of the case obliged them to advance from the evident fact of a vast variety of ancient religions to the conception of a religion of no special or local character, founded on duty to God and to man. Popular religions they alleged to be dependent on fear, and mere superstitions. In the absence, or discredit of revelation, that is, of any object of faith, the religion of philosophers and of most educated persons was subjective, or simply ethical. Modern philologists seem to reverse the process, beginning with the general idea and descending to the special. Johnson's first definition is, 'Virtue, as founded upon reverence of God, and expectation of future rewards and punishments.' His second, 'A system of divine faith and worship as opposed to others.' But he makes short work of the matter. Facciolati's treatise on the word would fill eight of these pages, and might yet be deemed to want a supplement. In the words, *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum*, Lucretius sums up all the superstitions, but leaves no opening for any better sense of religion.

As what Mr. Herbert Spencer has communicated to me on this subject is interesting, and rather at

variance with my own recollections, I must take the liberty to make large quotations from it. I must premise that the period in which I conversed most with Mr. George Spencer was 1819–1822 inclusive, and that Herbert was born in 1820. I carried a good deal of the father's talk in my head when I went to Charterhouse in that year, and it certainly contributed much to my self-conceit.

MY DEAR SIR,—The passages from three letters of my father sent herewith, one written in 1820, which was about the date referred to in your account of him, one written thirteen years later, and the other twenty years later, will prove to you how erroneous is the statement you have made with regard to his religious beliefs. Having in this case clear proof of error, you will, I think, be the better prepared to recognise the probability of error in the statements which you made concerning his philosophical ideas, and the ideas which, under his influence, you, in early life, elaborated for yourself.

The passage in which you refer to these gives the impression that they were akin to those which are developed in the 'System of Synthetic Philosophy.' I am anxious to ascertain in what the alleged kinship consists. Some twelve years ago, an American friend requested me, with a view to a certain use which he named, to furnish him with a succinct statement of the cardinal principles developed in the successive works I have published. The rough draft of this statement I have preserved; and that you may be enabled definitely to compare the propositions of that which you have called 'the younger Philosophy' with that which you have called 'the elder,' I copy it out. It runs as follows :—

I must consider the limits of space, even at the cost of seeming injustice. The 'rough draft' which follows in Mr. Herbert Spencer's communication may be found in the 'Athenæum' of July 22, 1882, and I recommend it to those who wish for a summary of

Mr. Herbert Spencer's System, and have not the opportunity or the time for consulting his works.

I should have much to say on the subject of evolution. My first thought is rather a cynical one. It is that if people wish to bury themselves, to grope in the earth, to retrace the melancholy past, and so put themselves out of the living generations of men, by all means let them do so. They can well be spared. If they please themselves, it is enough. The evolutionist is a dweller in the tombs, an antiquarian Dryasdust, a minute philosopher, necessarily more and more minute every stage of his interminable retrogression. Under this earth's fair surface and genial atmosphere is a vast and gloomy sepulchre, wherein are found the fossil records of material dynasties, merely animal, or merely vegetable organisations, ruder and ruder down to the dust.

But what is the first, and the most indisputable lesson to be learnt from the study of the dead and buried past. It is the immeasurably greater importance of the future in comparison with it. The past we cannot alter; the future is in our hands, and every second of time is a fresh departure. The great question of all questions is continually recurring, and demanding an instant answer. It is, What shall we do? For a large part of mankind this is settled, or at least made easy, by necessity and routine. They that are freer to choose, pity, perhaps too much, those that are living, and thinking too, by invariable and irrevocable laws. But they need not spontaneously abandon the living sphere, and the ever-hopeful future, for the dead and hopeless past.

There is a nursery tale of some sages, who when they saw the sun disappear below the horizon, instantly set to work digging downwards, to catch a sight of him on the world's other side. They might find something worth their trouble, but it would not be the sun.

As far as I understand the evolutionists, every conceivable terminus of their expectation is immensely and indefinitely remote, and doomed to be instantly overlaid, out of date—if not forgotten, if ever known.

Mr. George Spencer's philosophy might be materialistic in its tone and tendency; but it was ethical, social, and political—that is, in the relations of man to man and to his own inner sense. It was abstract, for he had to avoid the politics of the day, and perhaps had no decided opinions upon them. I do not remember that he ever touched on the formation of material existences. It was the same with my own very confused, very hazy, though very ambitious medley of notions. I stated in my 'Reminiscences' that from my childhood I believed in the Creation, in the Patriarchs, in miracles, and a good deal more.

But while the discussions I refer to were entirely ethical and political, necessarily involving the theological question, the only passage in the son's rough draft of an ethical significance is one single line enumerating 'the mind,' society, and all products of social activity among the material existences in which a certain supposed transformation obtains. Thus, on the properly material ground, neither I nor Mr. George Spencer could come into collision or competition with the 'Synthetic Philosophy.'

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

MR. GEORGE SPENCER.

YET I spoke of a 'family likeness' and a 'brotherhood,' and had the audacity to claim kin with the philosopher. Very true. My own philosophy, and I have no doubt Mr. George Spencer's, was, to a great extent, evolution, or the resolution of forces—nothing more or less than the philosophy of Epicurus and his Roman exponent, applied to moral existence, to opinions, habits, customs, ideas, and individual characters. I may even have gone further than Mr. George Spencer, for while I regulated all this precarious matter with Divine intervention, he rested more on the conscience and soul of man, which it cannot be denied is much more of a certainty than the other. A man may feel the hand of God, and guess, or conclude, or accept His interference, but he knows he has a conscience, and one that will smite him if he does not listen to it.

The soul and conscience were the basis of Mr. George Spencer's ethics and politics. He fully credited himself with the possession of an original soul, an absolute individuality, and a conception of right and wrong, not much beholden to extraneous or adventitious aids. But, with very rare exceptions, he believed other souls to be formed by the almost inevitable process of custom, accretion, assimilation, and balance of forces—in a word, that men are much what they are made by the men and

things about them. These, however, are matters within the command of man; and accordingly he believed it to be possible, and indeed it was the design of his own life by such means as he had, to make men wise and good by continual appeals, in word and deed, to their higher nature and their best inclinations. The continual reiteration of such efforts could not but have at least as much effect as the continual dropping from the eaves, or blows of the hammer. Whatever Mr. G. Spencer thought of his own soul—no doubt he thought it very stout and independent—souls generally he believed to be pliant and ductile, only waiting to receive their final form at the hand of abler and better men.

Buckle, the historian of 'Civilisation,' came into vogue more than forty years ago. I met him and a large party of philosophers at Baden Powell's in 1855, when the conversation ran terribly on material evolution. The topic I best remember was the question under what circumstances and physical conditions is there a preponderance of male births, or of female, as may be. But the subject of Buckle's publications was moral—that is, ethical—evolution, including all the operations of the human heart, mind, and soul. I was too much occupied to read his works, interesting as I found them, otherwise than in quotations. But they always reminded me of my old Derby friend, and my own dreams, and I kept saying to myself, *Agnosco veteris vestigia flammæ.*

Simply to anticipate the possible charge of unfair suppression, I quote the last words of Mr. Herbert Spencer's 'rough draft':—

That which persists unchanging in quantity, but ever changing in form, under these sensible appearances which the Universe presents to us, transcends human knowledge and conception—is an unknown and unknowable power, which we are obliged to recognise as without limit in space, and without beginning or end in time.

I utterly fail to understand this passage. How can we be said not to know, or not to have, any conception of a Power, when we see, and feel, and are ourselves the operation of that Power, and when we can even say that He changes in form?

The following are the extracts from three letters mentioned above as militating against my assertion of the non-apparent character of Mr. George Spencer's religious form or faith:—

Extract from letter written by William George Spencer to the Rev. Thomas Spencer, June 1, 1820:—

'You say you hope the child has been baptised at Church. He has not yet been baptised at all. With regard to his being baptised at Church I object to the system of Godfathers and Godmothers, and to the sentiments inculcated in the form, such as saying that the child is now regenerate, &c. In such objections have originated the delay. If by baptism is meant any more than a devoting of the child to God, I object to the baptism of infants as absurd. And unless a clergyman could feel himself justified in refraining from the form, except that part "I baptise thee," &c., I should not feel at liberty to employ one on the occasion. I undoubtedly should prefer the having him registered at the parish church, as being more secure than that of registering at the chapel; but at our parish church we have young Hope, a person I don't at all respect; and whether Mr. Evans, or Mr. Woolley, or Mr. Simpson (who by the way preached his first sermon on Sunday last at St. Peter's Church) would be allowed to do it I don't know. I almost feel inclined to ask Simpson if it would be allowed to register the birth of a

child in the Parish Register without having him baptised. And so to have him baptised at the Chapel.

Extract from letter from William George Spencer to Herbert Spencer, September 29, 1833 :—

'Remember that happiness does not consist in the abundance of external advantages, or, as the Holy Scripture expresses it, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." And I hope you are beginning to learn by experience it is more internal, that it rather consists in a consciousness of the lovingkindness and tender mercies of our most gracious Saviour, attended by an ardent desire so to conduct ourselves before Him that we may please Him in all things, so that at the last He may pronounce upon each of us those happy words, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."'

Extract from letter written by William George Spencer to Captain W. S. Moorsom, chief engineer of the Birmingham and Gloucester Railway (who had written to him a kind letter about me), date June 11, 1840 :—

'Your conduct reminds me of that of Paul, where he says, "Henceforth know we no man according to the flesh:" for, although it is saying a good deal, I think I might almost say, from what I have seen and heard of you, that you appear to take as much pleasure in promoting the welfare and happiness of those with whom you have to do in the way of business, as if they were a part of your own family.

I thank you for it, and I fervently join with you in the hope, that my son may not be overcome by the temptation, so common to the intellectual, to trust to their own guidance in matters so important as those connected with the spiritual life. To lean to one's own understanding, even in temporal things, is often unwise; but in spiritual subjects, with respect to which we are by nature so dark, it is indeed dangerous.

It is arrogating to ourselves the work of the Holy Spirit, whose gracious province it is to lead us into all truth.

The first of these letters is the one with which I am chiefly concerned, for it was written about the time that I saw most of the father. The letter

speaks for itself; but I am very sure Mr. G. Spencer was not then attending any chapel. His wife was a good, simple-minded Christian, and she would observe Sunday as other Christians usually do. She would attend a chapel; so too would her friends—indeed, I can have no doubt they did. I should now conclude it to be most probable that she by her example, or by a gentle hint now and then, won over her self-reliant, unbending husband, not only to the condescension of a little outward observance, but even to some more positive kind of religion than that which I only remember as a negative.

In a very early argument I had with the father on public worship, I maintained that, as we had social relations in this world, and were in fact always a company, so it was best that in the highest act of our being we should see and hear one another, and worship God in company. The social feeling he admitted to be an inducement, a sort of start; but held that, after once realising the conjoint action of a Christian multitude, it was best, indeed the only real worship, to contemplate God alone. He certainly left one to infer that he did not himself require this provocation or help, but found it better to worship in solitude.

Mr. Herbert Spencer has told me that in later years the father attended the Friends' meeting—which, I may observe, was just opposite the Philosophical Association. The son added that he did this, not because he agreed with their doctrine, but because he liked their form. I had always supposed that Quakers

had no form, and protested against form, so I am at a loss to see what can be gained in the direction of a religious faith and practice by objecting to doctrine, and liking a form which consisted in an obstinate rebellion against forms.

From the correspondence I have already quoted I must suppose Mr. George Spencer more express and decided in his religious views in 1830 than in the earlier years of our acquaintance. From 1830 I only met him casually and at long intervals, when we commonly went at once to some political question. My very last talk with him was in 1855, on the war with Russia, which he strongly condemned. The following extract from a letter I have received from Mr. Herbert Spencer brings the father's religious development, whatever it was, down to 1860. But I must remind my readers that my intimacy with the father began long before he was forty, and at the date of the following extract he was near eighty.

Yesterday I received the enclosed note from Mrs. White Cooper, who was for many years a favourite pupil of my father's, and who after her marriage with Mr. White Cooper, the oculist, kept up a correspondence with him. She has preserved his letters; and, prompted in the way shown by her note, sends me an extract from one of them, dated January 15, 1860, of which the following is a copy:—

'I quite agree with you that the feelings induced by the perusal of Herbert's Essay, entitled "What Knowledge is most worth," are somewhat depressing. Still I don't regret [your?] reading the Essay, for such depression does not of necessity tend to harm. It may teach us humility; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted, exalted in his faith. Even the just shall live by faith. From what I see of my son's mind, it

appears to me that the laws of nature are to him what revealed religion is to us, and that any infraction of those laws is to him as much a sin as to us is disbelief in what is revealed. And so long as he makes a holy use of his present knowledge, it is my privilege to believe that he will be led into all truth.'

This passage will, I think, show you that my father's religious views were, as I said in my reply, not of the kind you describe; and further shows that he continued to hold, in their essentials, the views in which he had been brought up, until a comparatively late period of his life. The passage shows also quite clearly, that while he looked upon my views with a species of sympathetic tolerance, they were not views which he had accepted, still less views which he regarded as being derived from him.

In the recent conversation to which I have referred I found my memory at variance with the son's—with the probability, I must say, on my side, and the authority, I must admit, on his. As I heard at the time, when Herbert was about ten—that is, in 1830—he was sent to his uncle, Mr. Thomas Spencer, with whom I had spent the Long Vacation of 1827. The uncle was then married to a lady of good family. Herbert was to be made a scholar. As I on one occasion tried the uncle's temper to the uttermost, I feel obliged to stand up for him. Yet I must admit that a child accustomed to gentle ways and quiet reasoning might feel a certain instinctive resilience against the uncle's society. However that might be, after a fortnight Herbert got up early one morning and disappeared, turning up at Derby at the end of the third day. The distance must be over 140 miles.

The son's account of the matter is that he had been sent to his uncle, as he was given to understand,

for the holidays, which expired in a fortnight. He then found that he was expected to stay on, and that this was the original understanding between the father and uncle. He conceived himself not fairly used, and at liberty to take his own course.

I can only say that it is contrary to all my recollections of the father that he should practise any kind of reserve. He was for doing everything above board, for practising neither force nor finesse, and for treating everybody as a perfectly willing agent. It must be considered, however, that parents, especially when they find themselves in difficulties with their children, are apt to give up theories, and even change their ways, so as, by hook or by crook, they may attain some immediate and necessary end.

I give an example of Mr. George Spencer's singular frankness of manner. My father one day came into the parlour in which he was giving a lesson to my younger brother and sister. In the midst of the conversation, with the children all around, he turned to my father, 'Could you oblige me with the loan of 30*l.* for a few weeks?' Without saying a word my father went out, returned with the notes, and put them into Mr. Spencer's hand. The children were quite startled. They knew well there were such transactions, and that they sometimes had untoward results; but they had imagined them to be always done with diffidence and reserve, a certain crouching and sinuosity of manner. However, they felt it was like Mr. G. Spencer to do as he did

About 1824, Mr. G. Spencer went to Nottingham, in the belief that he saw his way to some improve-

ment in the lace-making machine, the royal road to wealth in those days. He kindly invited me, and I paid him a visit of some days—the only time I ever slept in Nottingham. I had an opportunity of seeing the town well. Herbert must have been there, but he was on too small a scale to leave a distinct impression on my memory. I saw the machines at work—two of them, I think. I remember being struck by the sly and sinister looks of the men, in comparison with those in my father's employ. Mr. Spencer, so I have always remembered, felt he could not trust them. They were playing their own game, intending to appropriate his improvements, perhaps already communicating them to other lace-makers. It must have been then that I acquired some fixed ideas about the town; that nobody, it was observed, could accumulate more than 20,000*l.* there; that few could afford to keep a carriage, and still fewer did keep one, so great was the fear of provoking jealousy; and that the men were generally in conspiracy against the masters.

It struck me that his Nottingham experience might give Mr. Spencer some insight into the realities of life, and the difficulties of dealing with men as they are, and human nature as it is. I wonder whether he then and there tried his panacea for all moral ills—that is, steadily appealing to the higher parts of the human nature. I left with great misgivings as to my host's success. By December, 1826, he was back at Derby, attending his pupils, our family among the rest.

It must have been in December, 1828, that my

father, having recently bought the Friary, wished for a more exact map of the ground, that he might amuse himself with plans for its eventual conversion. Mr. G. Spencer offered to do this for love, and I, for love too, offered to render the manual help required. He set about it hopefully. For three days I was stretching the chain, holding up sticks for landmarks, and carrying instruments and papers. Mr. Spencer was filling foolscap after foolscap with minute notes and calculations. I soon saw he was in a hopeless mess, and would never be out of it. The two last days there was snow on the ground. We both of us caught bad colds. At the end of the third day Mr. Spencer announced that he had done all that had to be done on the ground, and that he would work out his calculations at home. Nothing ever came of it. I am sure that the gentleman who taught and practised surveying in St. Mary's Gate, as a brass plate informed the passers by, would have done it in two days. The boundaries were rather irregular, but the area was under eight acres. The truth was, Mr. Spencer would not do anything as other people did it; he had always a way of his own. This of course deprived him of the facilities given by known methods and familiar routine.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

MR. GEORGE SPENCER.

IT was a fundamental idea of Mr. G. Spencer that everybody was to learn and to act, as much as possible, *proprio Marte*, from his own mental resources. The old rule was quite the other way: it was that the learner should believe and take on trust. When he had mastered the matter then he might be allowed to doubt—that is, to exercise his reason and his judicial faculties. I will not say that the old rule is not open to objection, for if learners never doubt they are still less likely to doubt when they are learned. So something of a mid-course, or a compromise, seems to me best, indeed unavoidable. But Mr. George Spencer was not a man for mid-courses. His rule was doubt, judgment, condemnation, first and in rapid succession, and learning afterwards. This of course would be only self-instruction, or inquiry, conducted under difficult, indeed impossible circumstances. As everything was wrong, everybody bad, or at least bad enough to be worth nothing in an important inquiry, you were necessarily alone in the universe, unless, in mere stress of difficulties, you condescended to accept some companionship or guidance, and so fall into the second rank of philosophical inquiry.

For a man of inventive genius and longing after originality, there could not be imagined a worse fate than having to go over Euclid day by day for half a

century with all sorts of pupils. So I was not surprised, indeed I was strongly reminded of old times, when I received from Mr. George Spencer, very late in his life, a little work likely to surprise any one not familiar with the author's character. It was entitled 'Inventional Geometry. A Series of Questions, Problems, and Explanations, intended to familiarise the pupil with geometrical conceptions, to exercise his inventive faculty, and prepare him for Euclid and the higher mathematics.'

This really interesting as well as curious manual contains about as much labour, difficulty, and scattering and shattering of brains, as could conveniently be condensed into 446 questions, thirty-two pages, and a penny postage stamp. Most of the questions are considerably more difficult than any in Euclid. It presented geometry as a field of discovery, in which any one may roam about, exploring and experimenting, digging, wading, and diving, and flattering himself that he is ever finding out something quite new.

There are minds naturally constituted for empiricism and vagrancy, and that revolt against the beaten track. Perhaps it may be as well to encourage them to find out things for themselves, since that is the only way in which they are content to learn. On the other hand, I cannot think the majority are so stupid as to think the severely logical reasoning of Euclid merely so much authoritative or dogmatic instruction. Any one with a really mathematical intellect would, I should think, lay aside this manual, as calculated to send his wits a-wool-gathering, and divert them

from the close application and exact training necessary to success in mathematics, or any other science.

But what was my loss and what was my gain at Mr. G. Spencer's hands? I have frequently had occasion to observe that it is impossible for any one to know what he has learnt, and what he had not learnt, from a teacher or from a familiar disputant. Teaching is the most thankless of services, for the pupil, even if he takes in what he is taught at the time, either lets it alone, or rejects it, or overlays it, or builds and improves upon it, and in any case soon forgets the particular matter and circumstances of the teaching. It must have been a gain to us all to discuss what I have described as ethical, social, and political questions, with a man who never lost his temper, who had always his answer, who referred to general principles, and whom we all respected and liked.

The great question—the question of universities, seats of learning, philosophies, churches, and sects, of debating clubs, and of large families—was righteousness, the right and the wrong of every matter. It certainly ought to occupy a large place in the mind, and even in the conversation, and it sometimes has hardly any place at all. Now I cannot say that Mr. G. Spencer hungered and thirsted after righteousness. I should rather say that he felt himself filled. He had always the look of a man contemplating a theory in the air, with a full sense of its completeness and of its sufficiency. Whatever might be alleged against his views was a thing that ought not to be, and there was the end of it. This of course tended to circum-

scribe the ground of our discussions, for it perpetually banished altogether from consideration whatever was repugnant to the position of the disputant.

Human nature Mr. G. Spencer held to be perfectible, or indefinitely improvable. Its vices belonged to the past; its virtues to the future. It was improvable by example and by teaching, but more than all by offering facilities and motives to self-improvement. Mr. G. Spencer protested against all 'charity,' whether public or private. I think he credited all who practised or advocated it, with a wish to corrupt the natural independence of man, and reduce him to beggary and pauperism.

Some of my readers may think it a very severe accusation to credit a man with an opinion of any class, as that it would systematically impoverish and degrade the greater part of mankind. But it was the charge then usually brought against the Tories, and even Whigs of the aristocratic old school. They wished, it was said, to use the masses for their own selfish purposes, even if it were only for ostentation; and for this purpose they had to enslave them, which was only to be done by continually encouraging dependence, and withholding all inducements and means to independence. I think I may say that Mr. G. Spencer suspected every gentleman, every clergyman, every person in power and office, with being, unawares of course, in a conspiracy to enfeeble, degrade, and crush the many, for the pride, luxury, and downright folly of the few.

All this was very good, some of my readers will say. But it was all in the abstract. It was not

dealing with the facts about us. But that defect pervaded all Mr. G. Spencer's arguments. He was always supposing a state of things that, in his opinion, ought to be, but which confessedly was not, and was not likely to be in our time. This was a universal equality, as far as nature and accident would allow. Whatever was contrary to this, or stood in its way, was so far wrong. Institutions, classes, privileges, ranks, honours, and all like creations of human vanity and ambition, he regarded as essentially wrong, to be endured indeed, but steadily counteracted and undermined in order to their final extinction. I should say the only right he accorded to such things was that of sufferance, or toleration under the circumstances.

The theory of equality has a wonderful capability of application to all persons and all questions. It is a universal test, or solvent I might even say. All human varieties melt away in the comparison of the equal with the unequal—that is, of the all-wise, all-good many with the besotted, iniquitous few. History, ancient and modern, of all peoples and countries, has only to be dipped in this magic bath to be immediately precipitated in a few crystals of absolute justice and truth.

But this continual contemplation and completion of a theory, even with the modifications which the most abstract philosopher must allow, militates against the acquisition of knowledge and the enlargement of the mind, by seeming to render them quite unnecessary. Persons are nothing; affairs are nothing; incidents nothing; wars nothing; party

movements nothing, when you have once got out of them all they are good for. I think I learnt from Mr. G. Spencer a way of thinking names, characters, dates, particulars, in fact all that makes a narrative, as so much raw material which might be thrown aside and forgotten as soon as one had extracted the essence, the only important part of all that glossy stuff. As applied to individuals, this meant your judgment upon them, which arrived at and duly placed in your theory, you might consign all the rest to any imaginable pit of destruction or stream of oblivion. Such a process, formed into a habit, might make a just man, but not a full man.

But perhaps this may seem not so unusual a way of thought and discussion—the way, indeed, of most politicians and most polemics, of whatever Church. They collect what they are pleased to believe their conclusions into their garner, and let the chaff go with the wind. The school-books label characters, if possible in a word, strongly and definitely; and as that is the inevitable sentence, so far does it supersede a trial. What I have attempted to describe hardly amounts to an original theory, likely to possess any one's mind and persuade him that he has the monopoly of knowledge. Well, what was the theory I caught from Mr. Spencer? Something of the sort there was, and it was as strong a possession as that which makes a man get out of bed and walk out of the window, under the belief that he is a hundred miles off, stepping out of a breakfast-room on to the lawn.

These creatures of the imagination, these conclu-

sions, these judgments, these essential ideas, these extracts, these quintessences, final as they were in respect of the matter they were obtained from, were nevertheless capable of action and reaction; they could be modified perpetually by the application of new ideas obtained in the same way. The doing of this was the philosophy I always had in view, though I was like the dreamer, who no sooner stretches out his hand or speaks, than he awakes and finds it a dream.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

MR. GEORGE SPENCER.

WELL, my readers will say, everybody is aware that one idea plays on another, and that moral speculation is a continual refinement. Not only the thoughts of the wise, but the talk of the witty and gay, is an endless evolution in which to-day works upon yesterday, and all the use made of a new idea is to make another out of it, and throw the older one into the shade, if not away altogether. So where was the originality or the speciality of your wonderful system? my readers will ask. I will answer them if I can. I am but their humble servant. The task is not altogether a pleasant one. My philosophy was but a quicksand, or a mud-bank, never charted, never sounded, now forgotten. Time there was when, with industry, I might have produced a volume—a dozen, indeed—all

about it. Nothing remains in my mind but a blurred page or two.

There certainly was the conception of a perfect system, an absolute perfection, within the reach of any one duly gifted, observant, and patient: for he had only to compare any new idea, or rather any new conclusion of the reason, with those already existing in the mind, and under the influence of a genial nature these ideas would grow to the best and truest form, like the creation of vegetable and animal life under the rain and sunshine, and we know not what other kindly influences.

But was this Mr. George Spencer's theory? Well, it was, and it was not; but, as that is nonsense, I must confess that I cannot now say. But I do remember that with him it was a universal war of ideas, or notions. These were good, or bad, and so they had to fight it out. Or they were confused, and had to be cleared. These notions it was also necessary to put in fighting form, and to mobilise—that is, when reduced to their simplest conceivable shape, and divested of all encumbrances. Every word must always mean exactly the same thing. Honour, virtue, justice, benevolence, patriotism, and any other terms that could come into a political question, he contended must be made as clear to the meanest faculties, and as incapable of misapprehension or double meaning as a shilling or a halfpenny. He strongly objected to the use of different words supposed to be synonymous, with no other object than to please the ear and produce the sense of variety. This he held to be as open to just suspicion as the use of an alias, a disguise, or

a false personation. There ought to be a genuine and unmistakable currency of ideas, founded on an exact standard, so that everybody might know what was meant by a moral statement, whether social, or political, or historical.

All this pointed to a moral mathematics, then no new idea, though it was the natural bent of Mr. G. Spencer's mind to believe that whatever he thought, he had found it out quite for himself, and was in no wise indebted to anybody else for it. I feel quite certain that he never mentioned authorities except to state his disagreement from them, even though it was evident that he thought all the world ought to agree with himself.

Now I think it quite possible that I caught more of Mr. G. Spencer's nonsense than of his sense. I might have picked up his wheat and blown away the chaff; but it was more my nature to reverse this process. I daresay I caught his egotism, his self-confidence, his vanity, his narrow range of ideas and feelings, his want of sympathy for the endless variety of objects claiming it on all sides, his stolidity against new impressions, and his self-righteousness against new instruction, if it should happen to involve the least humiliation. I certainly caught the idleness, the dreaminess, the isolation of a man who was glad to feel himself an insect buzzing and fluttering about to gather bits of honey or wax, with an absolute indifference to the beautiful organisations from which the spoil was collected. Life and history, whether of men, of nations, of churches, or of schools, disappeared altogether in this haze. They were all good

for nothing but to yield these precious grains of the true, eternal, universal philosophy, the key of all mysteries, happiness, and power.

I forget by whom, or on what occasion, I have been called to account for classing my own reveries, Mr. George Spencer's philosophy, and his son's, under the general head of Darwinianism ; and I have been reminded that Mr. Herbert Spencer was not born till eighteen years after Dr. Darwin's death, and was not acquainted with his works.

Now I am fully aware that it is not possible to offer a greater insult to an evolutionist than to hint that he has been evolved himself, and is an example of his own theory. It is his firm belief that everything else in the universe has been evolved, but that he is the single exception. He has been neither evolved nor created, unless it be an act of self-creation out of nothing. In regard to anything that exists he is *primogenitus*, and from him the universe takes a new start.

This is not at all peculiar to Mr. Herbert Spencer. The admirers of Mr. Charles Darwin expressed the utmost indignation at the calumny, as they deemed it, that he had points in common with his grandfather, inasmuch that the germs of his system might be found in the grandfather's works. It is quite proverbial that family likenesses may strike friends and neighbours, and not be discernible by the members of the family. Many years ago I was travelling through Romsey outside a coach, and saw Daman, one of our Oriel Fellows. The coach stopping to change horses, I ran down the street to catch my

friend, and greeted him warmly. He failed to recognise me. When I reminded him who I was, 'Oh, I suppose you mean my brother,' was the reply ; 'people say that I am like him, but I never could see it myself.' Now I had not even heard that the Fellow of Oriel had a brother, or that they were Romsey people.

The Derby Philosophical Society happened to be remarkably enduring, continuous, and uniform. Few societies could be called so much the same thing for half a century. Here is the brief account of it in Glover's 'Derbyshire,' exactly fifty years after its foundation :—

> The Philosophical Society, in St. Helen's Street, was established in February, 1783, by the following gentlemen, who met for that purpose at the house of the celebrated Dr. Darwin, in Full Street : Dr. Darwin, Mr. French, Mr. Sneyd, Dr. Beridge, Dr. Pigot, Mr. Darwin, Mr. Leaper, Mr. Gisborne, Mr. Fox, and Mr. Strutt. Dr. Forester is the president. . . . The building in St. Helen's Street contains a capital library, with mathematical and philosophical apparatus, specimens of fossils, &c.

At the date of this description, 1833, Mr. George Spencer had been secretary many years, attending the meetings regularly, and taking his part in the discussions, such as they were, often on trifling matters. At this date there were members of the Society, and attending more or less regularly, Dr. Forester, president, son of Captain French, the second name in the above list ; Mr. Darwin, a grandson of the founder ; Mr. Leaper, an original member ; Mr. Fox, an original member ; and Mr. Strutt, Edward I presume, son of William Strutt, an original member, who had died in 1831, two years before this date. My father was mem-

ber, and occasionally made a mild protest. Chancing to speak of the Creation as the only account he could give of some matter, Mr. William Strutt dryly replied, 'We know nothing about that.'

I have no hesitation in calling these—that is, the mass, and only excluding a few, such as my father, who had scarcely a right to be there—'Darwinians.' There might be differences on minor points; there might be sects and schisms; but I have no doubt that the more the opinions of the original Dr. Darwin are inquired into the more will they be found to comprise all the philosophies emanated from the Association he founded. In his 'Zoonomia, or the Laws of Organic Life,' published in 1793, ten years after founding the Derby Association, he maintained that what we call creatures were not created by God, —for there was no such being as we imagine by that name—but by themselves, which could only be by the process of evolution.

I will grant that the sensation of absolute originality is not confined to philosophers, and is not without its benefit. The persuasion of a valuable deposit, and a peculiar function, leads to extraordinary exertions. I will even hail the happy inconsistency and the saving anomaly. If the philosopher be absolutely original and unevolved, then either he is a miracle, or he shares the common lot. If he be a miracle, that is a Divine interposition, and it is the Deity that sends us the blessing. If he shares the common lot, it follows that as a rule mortal man has that which cannot be comprehended within the laws of evolution.

For myself I believe that the *Divinæ particula aurœ* is independent of evolution, and deals only with it as a medium and mode of action. I believe that the vast human conflict around us is the work of free wills, operated on by a Higher Will, and in communion therewith. The free will of man may basely surrender itself to the laws of evolution, as the rower to the current; but it is not at the mercy of chance, or of material necessity, or of any supposed laws dealing alike, as the evolutionist frankly admits, with material and moral existences.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

REV. THOMAS SPENCER.

OF one memory I must deliver myself, it looms so large, and so obstinately recurrent. In so doing I feel like the lady who married an importunate suitor just to get rid of him. However, I have no wish to forget Thomas Spencer, whom, after near sixty years, I remember with increasing respect, and even gratitude, not to say affection. Nearly all my little stock of mathematics I had got from Mr. George Spencer, father of the philosopher. But he could not undertake to carry me higher. His brother Thomas we used to see much of on his occasional visits to his Derby friends. As I was expected to read for mathematical honours, and saw that my only chance was personal assistance adapted to my peculiar nature, I

proposed to spend with Mr. T. Spencer the Long Vacation of 1827. It may serve to fix the date when I mention that the Duke of Clarence was now flourishing about the country as Lord High Admiral, and that I saw him and the Duchess pass Mr. Spencer's parsonage, enveloped in a cloud of dust, and severely trying an escort of Somerset yeomanry.

Mr. Spencer was Fellow of St. John's, a ninth wrangler, one of Mr. Simeon's party, and the friend of a man I have always heard highly spoken of, Archdeacon Law, son of the Bishop, and nephew of the first Lord Ellenborough. I should not say that Mr. Spencer approved of the Simeonites generally; but his likings were few, and this does not matter. It was he who told me of Mr. Robinson undertaking the pastoral duty of Trinity Church, and then handing it over to somebody else; but it is entirely my own mistake to have supposed this was the Robinson afterwards so well known as 'Archdeacon.' It was a Mr. Hastings Robinson, who also was Fellow of St. John's. Mr. Spencer held a curacy for some time at Penzance, then much more out of the way than now, and more primitive. Then he had sole charge of a church at Clifton for a year or two, and was popular, as a preacher.

His college friend then gave him the small living of Charterhouse Hinton, between Bath and Frome, and with two very steep hills to ascend from the former. It was a decidedly good neighbourhood, with Freshford, Claverton, Wellow, Monkton-Farleigh, and other 'residential' spots all within a walk. There was a mansion with large grounds, a very poor little

church, and no parsonage. Mr. Spencer had to build one, starting I should think without a farthing. By dint of begging and borrowing, and after establishing a pretty quarrel with every tradesman, every workman, and most of his neighbours, he accomplished half the intended building. I came in for a good many stories illustrating the less presentable side of human nature; and, knowing my own want of temper and of common sense, I made a resolution never to do any building. I have lived to break it half a dozen times over.

Most people in the place had had some hand in the building, and were not thanked for it. But they had a good many triumphs over the parson. They had wished him to build in the village, but he preferred a little distance on the Bath road, though at a much lower elevation. In the village was a well of the clearest water always overflowing. Down below, Mr. Spencer took for granted he would be all the surer of a constant supply. So he sank a well in the rock, but reached no water while I was there.

He was a decidedly fine-looking man, with a commanding figure, a good voice, and a ready utterance. So the church was pretty well filled. He always worked himself up into something like a passion, and came home exhausted. It was a frenzy into which he went and out of which he came. The two strands of his church discourses were dogma and commandment. There was little scriptural illustration; nothing of our Lord's words and ministry; no sacred history or biography; nothing picturesque, nothing devotional. Mr. Spencer had nothing to say

on any religious subject, except an occasional remark of a cynical rather than religious character. There was the usual difficulty as to the poor people. He could not catch the men: if not at work they were at the public. The women were too busy.

I remember a fine handsome woman, with a family, and, I think, an indifferent husband. She had long fits of terrible mental depression, when she did not know what to do with herself. One of the church farmers of the place recommended a remedy which he said he had always found successful. It was to step out before your house, and curse and swear at everybody and everything for half an hour. I have since heard that this is not an uncommon idea, and that the supposed *modus operandi* is letting the devil out of you. It may be a forced interpretation of the text that the mischief is in what comes out of the mouth. Mr. Spencer was not at home in his village. He had none of the small coinage of courtesy. Mrs. Day, the lady at the mansion, was a woman of the world, and prepared to make the best of everybody, and he got on well with her. But even with her he had a ruffle.

The truth was poor Mr. Spencer was born before his time. He was a reformer in Church and State, and he really anticipated some great movements. He did not quite break out till after our brief acquaintance, but his heart was full and ready to overflow. He kept up a long and busy warfare against the vicious administration of the Old Poor Law. He was an agitator for Temperance before even the Temperance Societies. He was early for the com-

mutation of tithes, and for the more equal distribution of Church funds. He published some exceedingly crude ideas for a radical change in church services, in utter defiance of all liturgical sentiment and principle. I suspect it was to him a recommendation of these projects that, while they put him in the right, they put all his neighbours in the wrong.

I took long walks with him, when he talked much and freely. I heard afterwards that these walks had taken a good deal of strength out of him. We called one day on Sir Walter James, a relic of the last century. A large stand of flowers—a miniature garden—on the drawing-room landing had been his wife's favourite toy, and was now her cherished memorial. He had also lost a dear son high in the diplomatic service. He had several times conversed with Dr. Johnson.

I had fellow-pupils. Daniel had been there some time, and was preparing for Cambridge: a very good fellow, and a gentleman, who was a pleasant companion in my walks, when he would make amusing, but by no means disrespectful, remarks on our tutor.

Another pupil had brought his wife, expecting her confinement, and they had lodgings in the village. They had come under a triple inducement, engagement rather, as they had interpreted it. He was to be prepared for Cambridge; he was to be initiated into parish work; they were to be introduced to good society—which in their case would be an introduction indeed. Mr. Spencer gave the gentleman his two hours a day; and this, the latter said, was

all he ever got, and I cannot see how he could expect more.

The expected event came duly off. Mrs. Day, both before and after, sent the lady almost daily presents from her vinery and garden walls. It is a very nasty thing to remember, and perhaps still more so to mention, but I was sure, and am sure, that my tutor envied the poor woman these delicacies, and felt that he too had some claim. But the sad truth is there are natures that become ungovernable at the sight and smell of grapes, peaches, and nectarines.

Another fellow-pupil, also exceptional, I had for a short time. A Mr. Waring, a well-known Bath tutor, and a man of literary note, had had occasion to remonstrate with a pupil, a son of General Baynes, on his reckless driving. In order to check him, he proposed to accompany him. Young Baynes used his whip, and the horse ran away. Upon its stopping, he assured the tutor it was something amiss with the harness, and getting down he set it right. The horse ran away again. Seeing a dangerous point ahead, Mr. Waring jumped out, and was killed. Baynes had to complete, without loss of time, his studies for an examination at the India House. So he came at once to Charterhouse Hinton. Mr. Spencer immediately inquired into the work to be done, and Baynes produced a list of subjects. High up in it were 'Paley's Evidences.' 'We can let that alone,' he said. 'Under the circumstances, I had to keep indoors till Mr. Waring was buried, and I thought I could not do better than brush up my Evidences.' The afternoon of his arrival, we heard

for a couple of hours a continuous hammering in his bedroom. What could it be? At last Mr. Spencer proposed to me that we should enter the room. The new pupil was arranging with artistic taste a whole armoury of swords, daggers, guns, and pistols on the wall over his chimney-piece. Mr. Spencer observed gently on the defacement of the wall by all these nails, and was assured they would leave no mark. As we were talking, I noticed that his eyes seemed to follow one object with intense, but painful, interest. His eyes expanded, and his whole figure rose and straightened. He was watching the muzzle of a pistol that the youth had in his hand and was unconsciously twirling about.

Mr. Spencer was not wanting in moral courage, but in some points he was constitutionally nervous. We had a dreadful thunderstorm. I stood at the front door to see the lightning. It was the only time Mr. Spencer gave me a downright scolding, and it was for my impiety in finding pleasure in what should inspire simple awe. He went to the dining-room, closed the shutters, drew a sofa to the middle of the floor, and covered his eyes till the storm was over.

I must admit that it is very excusable for even a strong man to feel prostrate under the most awful of all Divine manifestations. The commanders of armies and fleets in the days of Lucretius were not wanting in nerve, but he describes them as quailing under a thunderstorm like other men— indeed, other animals. Nor is there any accounting for such sensations, which may arise from some very early and

indelible impression, and even be inherited. For all my earlier life, I cannot say till how late in it, I never could find myself under the dome of St. Paul's without the distressing apprehension of it suddenly coming down upon me. The idea was overpowering. Reason was paralysed. I knew the construction of the so-called dome, which is really a chimney, and no more likely to collapse than the Pyramid of Cheops. An earthquake might bring down every vault in the Cathedral, but would only leave some unimportant fissures over the south-west pier of the dome.

Before our new pupil had been with us a fortnight, he had so far recovered from the shock of his former tutor's death, that he was making frequent calls on the young ladies at Farleigh Castle, and eliciting a note of remonstrance from their father to Mr. Spencer; and was also endeavouring to arrange an excursion with a carriage-and-four, himself the driver, to Longleat.

There was a clerical meeting at the parsonage. Besides a gentleman who talked much and told travellers' tales which the rest were disposed to question, there was a Mr. Edward Wilson, then in charge of St. Michael's, Bath, before its rebuilding, and afterwards at Weston-super-Mare. His voice, his expression, his manner, and the matter too, made a deep impression on me then, and still more when I heard him afterwards at St. Michael's, one of an overflowing and earnestly attentive congregation.

Mr. Spencer married an Irish lady, through whom he became connected with the people at Hinton

Abbey. Improving his social position, he did not give up the part of a rather troublesome and unpopular agitator. The truth was, he had an excess of muscular and mental energy. The builders of his parsonage had left a good-sized stone quarry in front of it, and there he used to work with crowbar and pick whole mornings under a hot sun, for no reason that I could see but to let off steam.

Mr. Spencer used to maintain that it was advisable to feed up well, if you could, in order that in the case of illness you could be let down. The idea itself has a suspicious look, and I have not found it realised. I had one remarkable experience to the contrary. Not long after my going to Cholderton, there came a universal and really terrible visitation of influenza, as it was called for want of a better name. The 'hillness that goes about,' Mrs. Wayland found it called in Lincolnshire. At Cholderton the friends of the sufferers immediately came to us for wine, brandy, and broth. These we supplied freely, but with misgivings. The people all recovered after a few days. The gentry of the neighbourhood came in for their share of the epidemic. In every case their doctors went on the lowering system, and I think one or two were actually bled. The result was they were months getting over it; one a whole year, and one died.

My mathematics were an utter failure. Mr. Spencer used to sit by me rattling off long demonstrations which I had not the slightest power of following. On the other hand, I used to carry a book and a pretty little kitten with me to the top of a pollard behind the parsonage, and there waste the precious hours

playing with my companion. I copied Mr. Spencer's demonstrations into a book, but do not think I ever understood a line of them. I believe it was all for the want of being properly grounded. Newman used to say that geometry was open country, algebra tunnelling—a short but dark way to the end. I never got out of the darkness, and could not bear travelling in it.

Mr. Spencer never made a classical quotation, or allusion. He might never have read anything but the newspapers, which in those days did not compete with the magazines and reviews. But he had conducted his own college examinations the year before, and one of the volumes upon which he examined was lying about. I began to look into it. To anticipate disagreeable questions he volunteered that his questions had been all founded on the footnotes; and on my looking into them, and asking a question or two, I found that he had forgotten them.

Mr. Spencer kindly took me with him to Clifton. The chief object of his visit was to call on a well-known lady, the chief member of his old congregation there. She had a house in the Crescent. It was not certain she would be at home. Mr. Spencer arranged with me that if she proved at home he would probably be with her, it might be a couple of hours, and I was to amuse myself as well as I could in the meantime. When we came to the house I remained on the pavement, and Mr. Spencer was immediately admitted. I stood there five or ten minutes, and could no longer doubt that the lady was there, and Mr. Spencer deep in old times with her.

So I started. I had never seen the Bristol Channel, and I longed much to see it. With so much high ground about, I imagined I should soon get a sight of it. I set off alternately running and walking along the Avon, getting very anxious as to my appointment with my tutor, but still more anxious not to lose my opportunity, till at last, from a good elevation, I saw unmistakably the muddy waves of the Channel, and the Welsh hills beyond. I had been encouraged in my aberration by seeing river steamboats and landing-places. Turning my face homewards, I hoped to get a lift for a mile or two, but I cannot remember whether I was so fortunate.

Arriving at the Crescent, I found Mr. Spencer pacing up and down, as he had been now for three hours or more, looking anything but pleasant. The lady, it appeared, was not at home, but the old servant had warmly welcomed Mr. Spencer, and he had had a talk with her. When he came out I had disappeared. He was afraid to miss me by going elsewhere, and that was the whole of his visit to his old congregation. I am bound to say that I never saw anybody keep his temper better than he did under these exceedingly provoking circumstances, and that he never made any allusion to it after. This was in 1827.

The income of the living was very scanty, and only a few pounds of it from the parish. Mr. Spencer often reminded the people of this fact—which, however, would be no excuse for any want in his spiritual duties. But they were sad beggars, and when he had given a woman a shilling or two, the next thing he

heard was that her husband had been exceeding himself at the public. With this institution he was at open war.

There was a good school in the village. But on my return from my evening walks, generally in the Freshford direction, I used to fall in with groups of children, down to a very early age, coming from the mills; and I remember gathering from them that all through the winter they had to be at the mill, two miles off, by six in the morning, not leaving till six in the evening. Thus the journey to and fro would be in the dark for many months.

The mill-children worked the whole day for a very small pittance. But wages were low. I remember a man bringing on his shoulders a heavy loo-table from Bath—five miles, including two long and steep hills—for eighteenpence. For the same sum a man did the same journey, trundling a wheelbarrow full of luggage. Mr. Spencer seemed to think them not at all underpaid. When he was at Penzance he could always find an old woman ready to take a letter to a village seven miles off for sixpence.

From the windows of the parsonage we could see, at the distance of three or four miles, a steam locomotive drawing coals from the pit; and greatly exercised I was at the spectacle, then, in 1827, quite new to me.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

AN OXFORD D.C.L.

AT Oxford, and even at Oriel, I early fell in with singular characters, making acquaintance with some of them. Parents send their sons to public schools and universities, expecting their angles to be rounded and their roughnesses smoothed by daily contact with ordinary beings. They are little aware how much depends on home-teaching, and how indestructible are the habits acquired even in very early boyhood. Whether their child learns their ways, or forms its own, the result is more or less for life. One of my Oriel contemporaries was so eccentric that, while he frequently presented himself to me as quite necessary to a picture of the college, I felt he was so much out of place among luminaries of any magnitude, that it would be an equal injustice to him and to them to admit him. I shall not give his name, for it is easily traceable, and not at all worth while.

My friend was one of a large family—the eldest—and as no other boy appeared till many years after, his infancy was among girls; his father much away, his mother bearing rule, and that with a rod of iron. Not to be corrupted by English superstition and English immorality, he was sent, while quite a boy, to Glasgow University, and placed there under the care of an uncle. This was a descent from a 'good house' and a regular establishment to a pokey hole, slovenly ways, and distasteful associates. My friend

had to be content with mustard-stained tablecloths, and with indescribable dishes. He had to attend lectures with Irish students living on red-herrings and potatoes; and upon being betrayed into a dissecting-room, he found himself pelted with bits of human flesh and entrails.

He passed well there and came at once to Oriel. In lecture he proved at least that he knew how to use his grammar and his dictionaries, not to speak of cribs. He was slow, and far from bright, but I cannot remember that he made mistakes. His look, a sort of dogged shyness, the ungracefulness of his gait, and the narrowness of his cranium, bespoke an eccentric man. He complained to me once that, as he passed through the great quad he had heard offensive remarks—a nickname, I think—and had even been struck with missiles. That was possible, for there were one or two men in the college quite capable of it.

Not to speak of irrational likes and dislikes, or of the usual mixture of puritanism and worldliness, my friend was downright crazy in the matter of personal contamination. No Pharisee, no high caste Hindoo, ever took such pains to escape defilement. He had suffered much from the droppings at Glasgow, so he always preferred to walk on the outer edge of the pavement, or even in the road. He never left his own lodgings, or any other, without rushing precipitately into the middle of the street, to escape the possible downfall. Long before my acquaintance with him, upon leaving a house, he had found himself enveloped in a cloud of dust unwittingly dropped by

a maid or a workman. He had once come in for a copious aspersion from the rooks in the little grove between Merton and Corpus, and though that is an incident that can only occur about one fortnight in the whole year, he ever after ran through the grove at full speed.

At his own home, which was a good one, and well served, he had once slipped and come down on some grease that had been dropped just outside his study door, and he ever after made his exit by first standing on the threshold, and then jumping a good yard into the hall, and carefully picking his way to lock the door, which he would never allow to be opened. Neither father, mother, sister, nor servant would he ever permit to enter his room, and they had to pick the lock or enter by the window to clean the room now and then.

The undergraduate gown of those days was as ugly a thing as it is now, but it reached to the ankle, and was a serviceable garment in cold or rainy weather. My friend's must have cost thirty or forty shillings, and, if little used, was worth the scout's acceptance when the undergraduate took his degree. Whatever it was worth it was the scout's perquisite. For some trifling cause, my friend had early acquired an intense hatred of his scout, and I am certain would have rejoiced to hear that he was about to be hanged.

Under these circumstances, it might be supposed that he would take extra trouble to render his gown worthless when passing into hated hands. On the contrary, he daily descanted on the very valuable

possession the scout would step into. It would be quite as good as new. Even if he had to put the gown on again in an hour to attend a lecture, he never once took it off without folding it up carefully and laying it gently in a drawer, remembering every time the blessing he would leave to the man whom he inwardly cursed.

I spent a few days with him in the Isle of Wight, where he was then serving the church attended by his family. He had a fairly strong voice and a fairly decisive manner. His sermon was hard dogmatism, better, perhaps, than the wordy stuff one sometimes hears. Before mounting the winding steps of the lofty pulpit—for it was a new church, and a genteel congregation—he stopped, carefully folded his gown into a bunch, much after the fashion of ladies' dresses in these days, and then ascended, looking anxiously behind, right and left, to see that his gown, even so manipulated, did not touch the railing.

I brought upon him, unintentionally, a very severe infliction, which much exhausted him, and ruffled his temper not a little. We went to a quiet part of the coast, and I bathed. I had with me dear old Neptune, a real Newfoundland dog, belonging to Samuel Wilberforce, which I had brought from Oxford, and had to deposit at Brighstone. 'Nep' was the most affectionate, most amusing of dogs. A master he must have, but he would only own one at a time. When Sam was there, he was Sam's only. Failing Sam, he stuck to Robert. Failing both these, he stuck to Henry. Failing all, to me.

On this occasion I had undergone a transforma-

tion, and was out at sea. Neptune immediately attacked my friend, in a way he did not quite understand; but he did the very thing the dog wanted. He took up a stone and threw it into the sea, hoping in that way to get rid of his persecutor. Neptune could not find the stone in the surf, and so ran back to my friend, first shaking off the sea-water in all directions, and then springing up to demand another stone. This was repeated so rapidly that my friend was splashed all over, and found his arm aching with the attempt to throw the stone further and further into the sea. He repeatedly called to me to rid him of his assailant, but I did not hear, or see, till on turning to the shore I perceived my friend in an apparently angry conflict with Neptune.

The poor brute had before this lost nearly all his teeth by this amusement. His masters would drop a stone into clear water two yards deep, and set Neptune walking about for half a minute looking for the stone, which it would be impossible for him to identify under the water.

It must have been some years after this that the incumbent of a pleasant parish near Southampton Water went out of his mind the day of his marriage. My friend took charge of his church for some years. A child not yet baptised had the small-pox, and was believed to be dying. There came a message to the minister to come immediately and baptise the child. The summons was too much for my poor friend. He said at once that he would be certain to catch the disease, and in that case certain to die. On what special ground I know not, he told the friends to

send for the Dissenting minister. The good man came at once, baptised the child, proclaiming a good deed and a triumph over his craven rival.

The child recovered. The affair was noised abroad, and some of my friend's clerical neighbours represented to him that the baptism was in fact no more than lay baptism, which my friend had long before concluded against. So what did he do but send for the parents, tell them the Dissenter's baptism was good for nothing, and thereupon baptise the child over again. It proved a great scandal, and the whole parish appealed to the Bishop, who gave my friend such a lecture on his conduct as few men could ever have quite got over.

It may be asked why I tell such a story of a friend, and how I can still own him for a friend. Well, I can't regard him as quite accountable. There are few people who are quite, and in all respects, accountable. I don't think any theologians are. There was a reasonable basis in my poor friend's calculations, for I feel quite certain he would have caught the small-pox from the child, and that in that case he would have died. He always looked a ready victim for visitations of one sort or another. It is still a moot point whether a parish clergyman, going about his parish, entering houses, and visiting schools, is bound to run the risk of taking infection and carrying it about. The clergyman's wife is sure to object to it ; so, too, the squire's wife ; so, too, everybody in a position to shut the door to a visitor. To be consistent, however, my friend ought to have deprecated with equal earnestness the Dissenting minister's

contact with an infected child. The first step he took was a false one, and all the rest was muddle. He simply floundered in the mud.

During one of my college residences my friend presented himself unexpectedly at Oxford. A day or two after he complained of the cold, and evidently had received a chill. I think this was repeated. He explained that he had been in the Law School the whole day. I asked what had been going on there. It was a large, cold, dreary room, that I daresay I have never entered, except to look into from the entrance. Nothing had been going on there, and in fact my friend had been quite alone the whole day. This looked rather alarming as regarded my poor friend's sanity, on which there had always been just a little misgiving. He then unfolded the whole mystery, and a great mystery it was.

My friend had always taken great interest in all the forms and ceremonies of the English, Scotch, and Irish Universities, their several degrees, their respective symbols, and the modes in which these were to be acquired. At this time it recurred to my memory that he had early made the curious discovery that an M.A. might commute his degree for a B.C.L., and, if of requisite standing, proceed to a D.C.L. *per saltum*, that is in a few days. Now my friend was at this time serving the parish in which he had spent all his boyhood, and he felt, not without reason, that he wanted raising in the estimation of his flock. To go back to Oxford and return a Doctor, instead of a plain Mister, would do much for this purpose!

So this was what he was now doing. After certain preliminaries he had to go into the Law School, leaving the door open to all comers, and awaiting a challenge from either another candidate for a degree or some casual but qualified antagonist. My friend knew as much about civil law as nineteen out of twenty did at Oxford—that is, absolutely nothing; for though civil law appears to have been very generally studied at Oxford as late as the middle of last century, one now never heard of it.

My friend ever after rejoiced in his blushing honours, and felt conscious of a certain superiority over the mob of masters. But a curious contrast suggests itself. When a man has written a great book, or walked across a continent, or annexed twenty thousand square miles of territory, or killed fifty thousand of her Majesty's enemies, his services are recognised with an honorary degree. It is, however, a name and nothing more, for it gives no vote, not even the right to walk into the Bodleian or Radcliffe Library. What my friend acquired was no barren honour. It was an actual and highly privileged rank. He had indeed the privileges already in the M.A. degree, but a real D.C.L. ranks above an M.A., has a robe of state, and certainly counts for more in the eyes of all who know nothing about the matter.

My friend, as may be supposed, was rather an object of compassion than of respectful interest in the college. So his circle of acquaintances was a very small one. His information about the Scotch Universities gave him some start among us. Then

he quickly penetrated into all the obscurer portions of his new university, and was great among Bible clerks—that is, in any college but his own—chaplains, organists, clerks, singing men, and in St. Edmund Hall. He picked up a vast quantity of gossip, and, blind as he was to his own weaknesses, he had some shrewdness in his estimate of character.

This is not a pleasant picture. I venture to ask how such characters are formed. Much, of course, is due to idiosyncrasy. My friend had a much younger brother, as jolly, genial, and sensible a fellow as could be. His sisters were all sufficiently unlike this eccentric brother to laugh at him. I still think some accident of early education must have had to do with the shaping of this singular being.

Imagine a child unusually susceptible of petty correction; checked, snubbed, pulled up, straightened, scolded, nagged, worried, and bothered out of its little wits every minute of its life. Let it hear nothing but 'Don't do this, don't do that, walk straight on, don't stop, don't run, don't look into the hedge, don't look up to the sky, don't look at people, don't step off the pavement or the footpath, don't talk so much, don't eat so fast, take a drink now,' or 'don't drink so much,' &c. &c. &c. Let the child be scolded or beaten for getting splashed, or for rubbing against a dirty wall, or for not taking sufficient care of its school books, and so on through all the changes of its early life. As nature quickens its perceptions, and develops its mind, let it never see a smile. Let it learn nothing but the dullest and driest or the smallest of facts. Let it hear

nothing but hard rules and heavy judgments laid down without reason or mercy. Let it be taught that the only way to love God is to hate every person and everything that He has made, so far as they come within acquaintance, and so far as they do not square exactly with one's own notions. There you seem to have an approved recipe for making such a poor creature as my friend.

In his early years he had no brother, and possibly no boyish acquaintances. If his sisters had the same lively ways in infancy that they had when they were rapidly outgrowing the strait-laced bondage I found them in, there would be little sympathy between the boy and the girls, mutual recoil perhaps, soon aggravated probably by their education running on wholly different lines.

At the time of my visit to the D.C.L.'s family, R. Waldo Sibthorpe had a chapel at Ryde. He had various classes for special instruction, and having reason to suspect that ladies were not always competent to superintend the religious education of their children, had a class for mothers of families. It was to be very confidential, and they were all under a solemn engagement to report no ridiculous answers. A lady, the mother of seven children, was asked to state under what circumstances Jonah was thrown into the sea. After a little hesitation she replied that Noah threw him out of the ark. Early next morning the answer was known in every house in Ryde, and the class did not meet again.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

INJURIOUS PREPOSSESSIONS.

IN my 'Reminiscences' I spoke of mental possessions happily not quite lifelong, but engrossing the best years of one's life. I suspect I have had many such; indeed, that I have never been quite rid of them. I spoke of the dream of philosophy which has long departed from me, as many other philosophies have departed, leaving hardly a trace behind. I spoke of my terrible conception of the Athanasian Creed, and its double pressure on my intellect and on my natural tenderness. I have always been too apprehensive of labour and difficulty; of the obstacles that vanish before you can even get near them, and of the puzzles that are solved, as the logicians say, *ambulando.* I have mentioned above that up to man's estate I could never find myself under the dome of St. Paul's without a dread of it coming down upon me, and a consequent wish to move on. Of course it is not so likely to come down as the roof of one's own house, and would probably hurt you less; but reason had nothing to do with it.

All my life the thought of a precipice has set my finger ends perspiring, even on a cold day, when my fingers were as hard and dry as chips. I cannot be singular in that, but the only other instance I have heard of is that of Bob Acres, who, on having to fight a duel, felt his courage oozing out at the tips of his fingers. Perhaps I may present the fact to the evolu-

tionists as an interesting survival. When my quadrumanous ancestors found themselves in difficulties on the top of rocks or trees, natural moisture gave them better holding or footing; and none but those that had this natural supply lived to tell the tale and perpetuate their breed. The curious digital secretion is useless to me, but it may be a monument of antiquity older than celts, prehistoric combs, Aryan roots, and footmarks in the red sandstone.

In my boyhood I was a coward in the dark. This might be owing to the Irish blood in me, for the Irish generally people the dark. My little Irish pupil would talk for hours about the goblins that had been seen in the barns, or in the open fields, and cling to me in an agony of terror every evening when he came upstairs in the dark after his evening lesson.

But I am now disposed to ascribe my weakness to the same cause that stopped my growth too from eight to thirteen. Our Wardwick House at Derby was much sacrificed to a spacious hall, running from front to back, and of course into the first floor. Over the hall were some bedrooms, mine much the smallest, and a winding passage, divided by thin partitions. All this upper story, devoted to children and servants, was plaster-floored, as was then universal in Derbyshire. The notion was that they would have to stand much washing, that they did not convey sound below so much as a boarded floor, and that in case of the roof leaking, or taking fire, either element would be better arrested by concrete than by a wood floor.

But one result was that every footstep on the passage round my little chamber sounded as if in it. At

any hour of the night I might hear steps in my room, close to my bed. Imagination added gratuitous horrors. For years, I am pretty sure, I slept with my head under my bedclothes, and did not sleep well. I seem to remember the morbid sense of a world of my own, as in a slow intoxication. My mother, in after years, spoke of the room as having affected my health and strength; but she thought of its smallness, and its want of ventilation, for it had no fireplace. Happily the window and door let in air enough, if I had had the sense to use it all. I give these details as a warning to parents against the very common trick children have of burying their heads under the bedclothes. Charterhouse, where we slept ten in a room, pretty well cured me of that.

But a severe trial finally completed the cure. When close upon seventeen I spent my Bartholomew holidays at a small farmhouse on the Yorkshire coast, and had to walk every night a mile or two to my bed at Filey. I was always late, and it was generally dark. In my way there were two horrors, one fixed, the other movable; the first a milestone, the second a very desultory light-coloured donkey, who never knew where to be at. It was a case of necessity. I braced my nerves for both encounters, and have ever since been proof against hobgoblins of the vulgar sort. That many other *idola* have possessed me I know full well. That *idola* do still possess me I may justly fear; though so far I have been continually emerging from this shadowy realm.

Now my case cannot be singular or extraordinary. Is it not possible that many a good and sensible man

enters life, especially the life of a Christian minister, with mental possessions that unjustly burden and hamper him? He is told that he is to be a light in the darkness. This is generally so explained as to imply the lowest possible opinion of the people he is sent to. He has to inculcate doctrines—dogmas, I am told, is the proper word—they cannot possibly understand, and duties they cannot possibly perform. If he has a tender conscience he cannot meet one of his flock without the feeling that he has at least to say a word in season, and that this word must be of the very pith and heart of his message.

I am sure that he is often tongue-tied in consequence. The ordinary conversation of a clergyman with his parishioners can no more be dogmatic, or hortative, or professional, than his conversation with his neighbours, or with his own family. The result of too high a pitch is that a young clergyman—indeed, an old one also—will often pass from one extreme to another. Because he cannot deliver his soul he slides into the frivolous, or simply falls into the mood of those he is speaking to. He enters a house with the serious intention of leaving a blessing behind him, but he has found the task above his strength, or the occasion, or the level of the simple folk.

He has read a dozen times over, and has been told as often by his serious friends, that pastoral duty does not consist in gossiping, in tittle-tattle, or even in friendly sympathy upon earthly matters; but he knows not how to bring in the weightier theme.

The difficulty is, of course, felt most by those who have started with the old-fashioned idea of pastoral

duty. It is felt by those who when they walk about the parish, are expected to exchange a greeting and a few kind inquiries with everybody they meet; who cannot pass an open cottage door without stepping in; and who would be thought remiss, or heartless, or high-minded, if they often passed a farmhouse without an occasional call. Such a difficulty is felt almost universally. It is immensely aggravated when there exist doctrinal differences, or the merest leanings in a different direction. The feeling that doctrine is expected, that it will be weighed, and unfavourably criticised, creates a bar that many clergymen cannot get over, and hardly venture to face. There comes a time when they say to themselves that they have done the best, and can do no more.

CHAPTER XC.

MORETON PINCKNEY.

I HAVE said something, perhaps enough, of the brief episode in my life at Buckland. I left it almost heart-broken, with the feeling that I never could care for any people so much as I cared for them, and that no faces could ever take the place of those I was leaving. Moreton Pinckney was a very rough place. Its wild and native character had been its charm in the eyes of Tyler and Dornford, and, as I have since found, of Keble. I have already explained that my taking the living arose out of a proposal by Froude

that we should divide its duties; and I have often wondered how Froude came to think of what would have been a very unwise step on his part. I have recently seen a most interesting and most amusing letter written by Keble to Tyler in 1817, when they might still be called boyish friends, in which he says he wished for nothing more than that the living should be vacated, and the College should present him to it with the slight augmentation then contemplated. This was then his dream of 'settling.'

The face of the country has been so changed in my time, that I cannot expect Moreton Pinckney to be now what it was then, and had been for centuries. It had two commons, or spaces of broken ground. Close to one stood the church, the parsonage, and the school; the last recently built, together with a school-house, by Oriel College. A few yards off was an ancient, and rather handsome manor-house, then occupied by a farmer, since by a peeress in her own right for many years. On this common there had been various encroachments. From its opposite side ran, between banks and very indifferent cottages, 'Hog Lane.' As there were always pigs in it, running at large, that was a plausible account of the name, except that it was no distinction, for there were always more pigs than people in the village thoroughfares. It has, however, occurred to me that, in this case, 'Hog,' like 'High,' may be nothing more than the article now represented by the word 'The.'

Any hour of the day, especially at prayer-time, the pigs, huge masterful brutes, were forcing their

way through my garden gate. When we complained we were told that the pigs must have a run, and that, between schooling and lace-making, no child could be spared to look after them. At the proper season of the year, several times a day, straw was carefully laid on the common before the parsonage; children gathered round it; the village pig-sticker appeared dragging his victim, whom he despatched as he sang his last song; the straw was lighted, and a large black object was rolled backwards and forwards in the blaze. I suppose this was cheaper and quicker than scalding, and it was said to be better.

The parsonage was an ancient cottage, cheaply but conveniently enlarged by Tyler with a loan on the usual terms. The only incumbent I ever heard of as having 'resided' beyond an occasional visit was Parson Buller. When he lived in the flesh I know not, but he was believed to have haunted the place to a recent date, and it was hinted that his spirit was not yet laid. He had been seen several times riding a white horse in a cross-lane near the village, and had been heard pottering about the parsonage.

There had been an old cellar, though I never saw it, and he had always kept the key of it. Not so long before my time, a labouring couple with a good-looking daughter occupied the parsonage. She had a suitor she did not care for. He used to watch the old people away and sneak in. One evening there were sounds in the cellar. 'What's that?' he exclaimed, with some alarm. 'What's thee frit about?' she answered; 'it's only Parson Buller.' He decamped, and never returned.

The ancient part of the parsonage faced the church, which was a few yards off. The parsonage gate was in the path to the church, and a thick and lofty yew hedge ran between the church path and the garden. The clergyman came out of church first, and would often turn inside the yew hedge, especially if he had visitors. Tyler once brought down William Bishop for his Sunday's guest, and asked him to preach. 'But,' he said, 'the people here are very simple, and don't understand long words or long sentences. You must give them the plainest and shortest Saxon.'

Bishop opened his manuscript in the pulpit, and shortly saw ahead some rather long words, most of them probably the '-ations' that so encumber our language. He saw, too, sentences which threw out rather long tails; so, as he went on, he laboured to break the big words into pieces, and to cut the sentences into smaller lengths. Tyler soon perceived that he might as well have let Bishop alone. On turning up inside the yew hedge, they heard the comments of the disappointed congregation—one of them loud and energetic: 'I know'd as how he was a stick before he got into the pulpit.' Like other people, a preacher must take care how he changes his front in the face of the enemy.

But the rule of short words, like most hard and fast rules, is apt to give more trouble than it is worth. Not long ago a clergyman was invited to lecture to some colliers upon Egypt. He was warned not to use words of more than two syllables. Very soon he had to speak of the crocodile. He substituted for the forbidden trisyllable an Arabic dis-

syllable, not much to the gain of his hearers. But the longest words can be shortened *ad libitum.* I heard the Duke of Wellington speak in the House of Lords late in life. He used the word 'consideration' several times, and always reduced it to two syllables. If this be thought hardly possible, let me add that the word 'alms' is the final residuum of either the six-syllabled *eleemosyne*, or the five-syllabled *alimonium.*

Upon entering the church, everybody looked towards the clergyman, if in the reading desk, and bowed. At the time I thought this might possibly have survived the period when there was no resident clergyman, and when there would naturally be a mutual recognition on first meeting a stranger. The custom must now have been acquiesced in by clergy of very different schools—I suppose, on the ground of common civility. I have now no doubt that it was a survival of the ancient bowing—not to the altar, for that is repudiated, but to that which was upon it.

The other village green was on higher ground, and held its own, for it had the chief public-house, the lace-making school, and several farmhouses, and cottages of a better class. It was also the part of the village nearest to Canon's Ashby, a short mile off. This is the seat of the Dryden family, begun in the early Plantagenets, and finished in the last of the Stuarts.

The manor belonged to the Duke of Grafton, and a court was held once a year, at which officers were appointed, and trifling quit-rents received. As this was all that manorial authorities ever did, and they

were quite inaccessible, if not also utterly powerless, there were no means of preventing, or restraining, or regulating any encroachment on the waste, or any usurpation of the soil. Nothing whatever could be done for drainage or for decency, putting the look of things out of the question. The first time I saw Lady Dryden she warned me I should always have either typhus or scarlet fever in the village, and I certainly had a good deal of them, and some very sad cases.

The church was a pretty and interesting structure, but a wilderness of enclosed pews of all sorts and sizes. The chancel was entirely boarded away from the nave, with an immense royal arms painted on the boarding. The houses were of stone, of the Jacobite or Caroline period; some probably much older. The roads were all of the country stone, and were very bad indeed. I remember showing to Sir H. Dryden a parasol, which, as doubled up, was near half a yard long, and which I had held upright in a rut before his house without it appearing over the top of it.

The village lay pretty central between Northampton, Banbury, Brackley, Towcester, and Daventry, and could not be reached from any one of them, except by opening about thirty field gates; the roads, for economy, being only fenced on one side. It was wonderful how little obstruction, or abatement of speed, was thus caused, and how both man and horse seemed to like the arrangement. At night it was dangerous, and I had some casualties with my clothes.

At the 'Inclosure' the glebe had been assigned

two acres more than its just proportion, on consideration of the parish quarrying in it for the maintenance of the roads. The two acres were to be selected. They never were, and the way-warden gathered the stone where best and most handy. It proved a running sore.

The whole neighbourhood is table-land. Within a few hundred yards there are streams flowing into the Thames, the Wash, and the Bristol Channel. The valleys and the villages of Northamptonshire are very like one another. There is nothing great and distinctive; no hills, no rivers, no plains of any size. The ash is the weed of the county. 'You've come to a very cold field,' was one of my first greetings—field being the usual term for a parish or like district. In wet weather I was told, 'The grips are foul'—that is, the hollows in the ploughed fields are full of water. I had to do some draining on the glebe, but I was repeatedly told by the farmers that the butter was sweetest on the undrained land; the draining, I suppose, bringing out the coarser grasses.

Butter, pigs, and calves were the chief products of the parish, and they went mostly to London. My nearest neighbour, the farmer occupying the old manor-house, had sent up his butter many years to the dealer in Newgate Street who supplied George IV., and he had lost a hundred pounds through the irregularity with which the King, then Regent, had paid his butter bill, and the consequent ruin of the dealer.

The calves were taken to points on the great roads and put into immense vans two stories high, accommodating thirty or forty of the poor creatures.

These huge machines, drawn by half a dozen horses, and doing much of the journey by night, were the terror of the stage-coachmen. The drivers slept, and even if they were awake would not take the trouble to keep their own side of the road. The coachmen had their revenge. When the place was convenient, they would alight and turn the calver's horses into a cross-road, or even right round, when the driver, upon waking, found himself home again sooner than he had expected.

The parish flowed with milk. Every farm had a tank into which the skimmed milk ran, and from which it was drawn, or pumped up, for the pigs. Some of the pipes ran under the public roads. Of course this milk was always sour; but the pigs did not object to it. A cottager in the village offered to show me something. Taking me into a yard behind, he lifted a trap-door over a disused milk-tank, and snuffing, as if he liked the scent that issued, asked me to look down. Presently, in the darkness, I saw some fiery eyes. It was a litter of fox cubs he had found, and which he kept there, expecting to get half a guinea apiece for them some day. For the present it was a secret.

Moreton Pinckney butter was said to be among the best in England, but I was surprised to find that it was naturally so pale that Londoners would suspect it of lard, and that it had to be coloured. I was still more surprised to find that the cream of which it was made was always sour, the vat being never quite emptied, and the stock generally being several days old. On the other hand, in the midst of all this dirt

and slovenliness is the great school of cleanliness and purity. This is the dairy. It is a life of scaldings and scourings, scrubbings and rinsings, from early in the morning to late in the evening. No drawing-room or boudoir demands such fastidious and incessant care. A good dairymaid is held fit for any station she may be called to.

In no part of England have I seen so primitive a state of society. The great number of small yeomen and small farmers might lead one to expect here that degree of competency without excess, and content without baseness, that poets and philosophers dream of. I cannot say that the results justified any such expectations. The social standard of Moreton Pinckney was no better than I have found it elsewhere. Nor had I any reason to believe that there had been a decline from a happier and better state of things.

Moreton Pinckney did not at all help me to answer a question I have often had occasion to ask: How did the very small gentry of old England hold their ground for centuries on the very little estates, upon which ladies and gentlemen, and farmers too, would soon come to nothing in these days?

One of the first things I had to do was not pleasant either to me or to the parish. It was paying rectorial tithe to the college, under a composition of some standing. The tithe-payers, like all other tithe-payers in the kingdom, had applied for something back. There was nothing exceptional in the matter, which was really between the college and the landowners, who wished to reduce the tithe as low as it could decently be done.

I was supplied with the tithe-payers' case, and with the tithe-owners', and commissioned to satisfy the former that their request was unreasonable. I thought I could do this more easily in writing than by word of mouth, so I wrote a long letter and gave it to one of the largest farmers to read at the next vestry meeting. I believe I wrote in the Oxford hand of the period, but the next day I was informed that the vestry could not make out a line of my note, or discover even what it was about.

CHAPTER XCI.

MY PARISHIONERS.

NOW who were the people that Keble had fondly aspired to settle amongst; that Tyler had spent many vacations and much trouble upon, bringing his high-born friends—future statesmen some of them—to enjoy the humours of a midland village; that Dornford had found so interesting; that his mother had taken under her care; and that Maximilian Geneste, a considerable person in the Evangelical world, had served for some years?

There were many farmers, several yeomen, very many small freeholders, as many tradesmen as the place could find work or customers for, and not one single labourer, in the sense of an independent workman offering his labour for wages, but a multitude

of paupers. This implies that there were no masters or employers in the full sense of the words. The only exception to this state of things was that there were four pensioners receiving a shilling a day, who, not being on the parish, had to make their own arrangements, and, being able to work at low wages, had to be content with them. One of them did all that my garden wanted, working one day in the week at two shillings a day.

The present generation little knows the state of things at that time, half a century ago, and the social revolution that, with some cost of sentiment, healthy or otherwise, has been accomplished. Six years before this I had had a noisy and not very agreeable introduction to the subject of the Poor Laws, in the reform my father made in their administration at Derby, described above in the chapter on St. Werburgh's Workhouse. In the report and 'Extracts' published by Parliament in 1833 my father's work reads very easily; but we had a sad time of it, my father being single-handed, and nobody caring to run the risk of annoyance unnecessarily.

That was a town experience. Very shortly after I had a glimpse of the country form of the evil. With the present Margaret Professor of Divinity I spent the Long Vacation of 1828 in an old manor-house at Deddington, ostensibly reading for my degree. Some time after breakfast we daily noticed a number of men of all ages creeping rather languidly past the window. It seemed neither work nor play. What was it? Who were they? I counted. There were forty of them, no doubt the same day after day.

I followed them. In less than a mile they stopped at a large and rough stone-quarry, formed themselves into groups, sat down, and talked. After a time they rose, and set to work getting out stone for the roads. This was well after ten o'clock.

In a few days I wished to see how long they worked. Starting long before four o'clock, I met them returning to the town. Proceeding to the quarry, I had a curious proof of the very slight exertion of muscular strength required of them. Taking the biggest crowbar I could find, I took it to the edge of the quarry and dropped it down twenty feet, perhaps. It snapped in two, as if it had been a piece of glass. Of course I reported my own mischief, and paid for it, remarking, however, on the fragility of the tool. These men had half the day to themselves. It was in the height of summer. The clergyman, a connection of the Wilson family, was inveighing Sunday after Sunday, with almost shocking plainness, on the universal immorality of the place.

Entering upon my duties at Moreton Pinckney, I had various warnings that I should find the public-house my worst enemy, and that I should have a hard battle with it. In the first place it would not close at eleven, especially on Saturday. There were no police in those days.

It could not be long after my arrival that, as I sat in the parsonage, I heard a great uproar at the public-house, on the upper common, near a quarter of a mile off. It did not cease at eleven, or at a quarter past. I rose and started with the resolution to support law and order. A number of men were about the door

of the public-house, but the hubbub was within Knocking at the door and asking for the landlord, I was told that the house would be clear as soon as the gentlemen had settled their business. I remarked on the lateness of the hour, and the disturbance. There came a voice from the parlour, 'Oh, come in, Mr. Mozley ; take a seat, Mr. Mozley ; we are glad to see you.' I walked in and found twenty or thirty farmers, in a cloud of smoke. They had finished their business, and had only their pipes to smoke out.

This was the monthly apportionment of the paupers—that is, the whole labouring population—among the larger ratepayers. All the former had assembled at the bar, or the yard behind, or in the offices, or in front, to hear their fate. The appropriation was sometimes equally disagreeable to the master and to the man, and it was no uncommon thing for master and man to begin or to terminate a month's association with a fight on the green.

The payments were not wages, for they bore no relation to the work done, or to strength, or to industry, but only to age, condition, and circumstances. A strong man of five-and-twenty could not get more than a shilling a day, so he had every inducement to marry, for then he got head-money, and as he had the first handling of the money, he could give as much or as little of it as he pleased to his wife and children. Many of the children were half naked and half starved ; the mothers almost in as bad a case, and unable to come to church in consequence, or even to step out of doors. As for the shoes, they were a pretence. The old farmers said they remembered

when the village children went about barefooted, walked well, and were the better for it.

Before my time the mothers were always at Lady Dryden's, begging for shoes. Chancing to see on the continent in common use a sort of shoe, not quite a sabot, with upper leathers tacked on to a wooden sole, she imported a hundred pairs of all sizes, and tried first to sell them at less than cost price, then to make presents of them. English pride came in the way. Even as presents they were rejected. The point of honour was felt all the more because Northamptonshire is a county of shoemakers.

The children swarmed about the place, and the young men loafed about. The hours of labour were short, and the men, though they had not enough to eat, had always enough to drink. Right social feeling was impossible where man was a weed, a curse, and an enemy, possessing more power of mischief by doing nothing than he could have won by doing all he could. It was impossible to employ all to advantage, but all must be employed on some terms or other.

This had been the state of things time out of mind, and it had been the rule far and wide. Whenever the property had become much divided, it ceased to be any one man's special interest to restrict the supply of labour to the actual demand, and to save the rates from an undue pressure. There were always some, such as the shopkeepers and the publicans, whose interest was on the side of numbers; and everywhere there were people trying to make a lodgment wherever they could.

Wherever one landowner had had sufficient com-

mand of the parish, he had pulled down every cottage he could. The adjoining parish of Canon's Ashby had once been populous with the retainers of the Abbey; and every now and then the plough, or the spade, came on the blackened stones and the cinders of an ancient hearth. There were now in it no habitations but the mansion, a farm or two, and the cottages of the gardener and the gamekeeper. Five miles off, Edgcott had thrown off the whole of its labouring class on the adjoining parish of Chipping Warden.

Indeed, wherever this could be done it had been done. Inhuman as the process might seem, it had become a necessity. If property was to enjoy itself, or even to hold its ground, it must deal with labour on something like equal terms, and with liberty of contract. This was impossible under the Poor Laws of that period, unless the proprietor could get rid of the existing incubus of pauperism. The Drydens were not rich; they lived very quietly; they exercised hospitality and common charity to the full extent of their means, and they did much to cheer and brighten a neighbourhood which very much wanted it.

CHAPTER XCII.

CURATES-IN-CHARGE.

NON-RESIDENCE is accounted a crime in these days. The Legislature has charged itself with the discipline of the Church, and is therefore bound to prevent or to punish this crime. This it does with its usual hypocrisy. It directs that every incumbent shall annually make a return, in which, among many other answers, he has to declare whether he has performed the legal amount of residence. This is carefully and precisely defined by the statement that ninety days are the whole time an incumbent can be absent without licence, or a breach of the law.

These returns are a mystery. Who receives them? Who reads them? What becomes of them? I have not the least idea how they are usually filled, or whether the clergy in general do fill them, or what happens in case of their throwing the questions into the fire, or making a return either impudently true or utterly false. At long intervals, and in reply to questions asked in Parliament, the answers are summarised and published, when nothing seems to come of it.

I have frequently had reason to know that incumbents had not resided nine months, or even six, for no reason whatever except they preferred to take their pleasure elsewhere. I never heard of their coming to any trouble for it, and I never wished it—not at least when they had taken care to have their place well sup-

plied, and had also made up for lost time while in residence. The reason of the thing, I am strongly of opinion, is in favour of an ample allowance of non-residence. But I cannot think matters should be left in that state, that a scrupulous clergyman is put into great difficulties, and harassed with painful doubts, when his unscrupulous neighbour just does what he likes, and is never the worse for it. That all clergymen are conscientious in a degree is no more than can be said of all labourers, all shopkeepers, all horse-dealers, all bank directors, all political agitators, and all statesmen. All have their consciences.

A distinguished Oriel fellow, son of a well-known judge, being himself destined for the law, and having some qualms, took courage to ask his father, 'Can a lawyer have a conscience?' To this the reply, after a short pause, was, 'Yes; but not a raw one.'

I have some time since come to the conclusion that an incumbent had better not have a raw conscience in matters of no real moment, so long as he can feel that he is doing his duty to the best of his power. But this has been the lesson of a long experience. Being naturally a stickler for law, I have always felt much virtuous indignation at non-residence taken with 'French leave,' or upon fictitious grounds, or for a whole incumbency, upon the simple ground that the incumbent felt himself more comfortable anywhere else than at his living.

But I must give it as the result of my experience that non-residence might be not only allowed, but encouraged, not to say enforced, in very many instances. If a man will not do his plain duty, he

does more harm by exhibiting this contempt of his Master and his flock in his own parsonage than if he were quite out of sight, and a long way off.

Then, there are several positive advantages in favour of 'curates-in-charge.' They have a superior immediately over their heads, and one who is interested in supplying the incumbent's place so well as to make up for his absence. He is sure to be informed of their shortcomings. He does not hesitate to scold them if remiss, or going wrong. Supposing—what indeed is generally the case—there is a frequent change, the parish has an instructive and sometimes picturesque variety of curates and curates' belongings.

At Moreton Pinckney I found Mrs. Dornford, the Cambridge lady, still in everybody's mouth. She must have found the people very different from any she had yet come across, but she had won their respect. Mr. Maximilian Geneste and his lady were rather of the seaside watering-place class, with congregational rather than pastoral ideas. They had much interested and puzzled the inland parish; chiefly, I think, by the rapidity with which they had ascertained who were to be saved and who not, and had made their arrangements accordingly.

Mr. Shaw had brought his mother with him. She was the widow of an army tailor who was said to have made and spent 10,000*l.* a year during the great war, and then to have found his occupation and his income gone. She was full of regrets, and continually talked of the splendour and luxury she had once enjoyed, and the circle she had moved in. Lady Dryden took her to task. 'You've had your innings. You cannot

complain. You ought to be more grateful for the happiness you have enjoyed, than sorry for what you have lost. Think of the past, and be thankful.' The poor lady could not see this.

Every night, when the servants and all the village were in bed, she dressed herself in her best, lighted several pairs of candles, seated herself before her toilet-table, eyed herself in the glass, and read or wrote till two in the morning. When that hour came, however, she had another sad reminder of man's inhumanity and fortune's unkindness. From the wreck of her property she had rescued a feather bed, said to have cost a hundred guineas. When it arrived at Moreton Pinckney, the first time Mrs. Shaw sought refuge from her cares in its well-known embrace she found it unaccountably hard and anything but sweet. On opening it the next day they found the down gone, and among other rubbish supplying its place many people averred there was a cock's head.

A rapid succession of such households brings much more of the outer world to a rural parish than most resident incumbents can bring with them, unless they are more considerable personages than rural incumbents generally are.

But, it must be admitted, curates-in-charge seem a volatile race, bound by no laws of space or time, and perhaps quicker to forget than to learn the people they have been placed in intimate relation with. They ought to be able to tell a good deal, especially in the comparison of one district with another, one period with another. When I was Rector of Cholderton, I saw two men who had served that church for

a year or more before the French Revolution. One was Dr. Bowen, a sharp, shrewd little man, who died at a great age, at St. Albans, where I think he had a school, and was a magistrate. The other was Mr. Rice, a remarkably fine old gentleman, who used to frequent the early market at Caen, and carry home his provisions for the day. I was too busy about other matters to sound his Cholderton experiences; nor do I think he would have had much to tell. But something might have been drawn out of him by a practised interviewer.

As I reconsider what I have written on curates-in-charge, temporary or for longer periods, I seem to hear the words of a living prelate: 'We don't want views or opinions. Everybody has them, and they are no good. Tell us what you are doing, or what you have done.' My own answer to the last demand would be very mixed indeed. I have done well, and I have done ill. I have been fortunate, and I have had experiences unsatisfactory, ridiculous, and even disastrous. I feel warranted in saying that any incumbent who starts for his six weeks' holiday, leaving his parish in strange hands, does so at great risk. Nor is it the downright 'black sheep' he has most to beware of; the white sheep may be quite as bad, as far as the spiritual interests of the parish are concerned. Necessity, I am too well aware, rules and decides the question. Somebody must be found at the last moment; some offer must be closed with. Subject to this necessity that knows no laws, and reduces the wisest and the best to the counsels of pure desperation, let me hazard a few warnings. Beware of the Sunday-

duty man. Beware of the cathedral man eking out his miserable pay with 'occasional' duty. Beware of the London gentleman, who anchors himself in your parish, but at that anchor rides and drives over half the county, beginning his excursions early on Monday, and ending late on Saturday. Beware of the gentleman who brings down a box of novels and light literature, or the materials for a new theological work. Beware of the gentleman who has long imbibed a conviction that a country clergyman has nothing to do, and that work is confined to towns. There may not be a very serious mishap in your absence—that is, anything much out of the way. But you may hear that some poor creature has died of a sudden illness, or an accident, after hours and days of suffering, and no clergyman near. You may hear of some dreadful quarrel running to any length for want of a peacemaker. You may hear of some babe coming into the world and leaving it without a blessing—nay, even with the mother following it in like destitution. Remember that a large section of the clergy do not believe in pastoral work, and regard the tradition of the Christian pastor as they do the stories of monks, alchemists, and necromancers.

I wished to leave Cholderton in charge of a *locum tenens* for three months, paying him occasional visits. Mr. Burns, with whom I was then in frequent correspondence, recommended a gentleman with a wife and no children. I found him pleasant, well-informed, and interested in my parish, but still more in Church gossip. The only thing about him that offended me was his harsh and contemptuous manner to his wife

who was more of a lady than he was of a gentleman. On my resuming charge of my parish and visiting the little school, a child told me in answer to a question that there were seven sacraments. 'Seven?' I exclaimed. 'Please, sir,' the clerk's wife interposed, 'that is what Mr. —— taught them.' This was clearly a breach of faith and good manners. The *locum tenens* had to teach the Catechism and make the best of it. As to the particular answer given in the Catechism, I have always thought it arbitrary, misleading, and offensive. It starts with a definition, and then discards all the means of grace that it assumes not to be included in it.

CHAPTER XCIII.

MY SCHOOLS.

I AM obliged to put the school before some other matters, because it accounts for what might otherwise be unaccountable. The Moreton Pinckney children were a very interesting lot, but a good number of them would hardly have been thought up to the mark of a London ragged school. One after another soon appeared in a new garment or new shoes; and as there could be only one source of supply, it was rapidly drawn upon. There was nothing but the church path between me and the school, and I visited it most school-times, taking a large class in the schoolroom, or a smaller one in the kitchen that opened into it. The master was a good machine, who worked well

into the children's heads, or tongues at least, the book he held in his hands, but no more. It was woeful to find what a dense mass of ignorance buried a thin stratum of knowledge.

In those days the Bible was read with very little illustration. My own idea always was to make it the central line of universal knowledge. Few can do without a central line. Try it. Read Russell's 'History of Modern Europe,' and tell me where you find yourself in a twelvemonth. Simply nowhere. These poor children, I found, knew nothing out of the text. They knew not where or when these things happened; or what sort of people the Egyptians were, or the Greeks, or the Romans; or what a Cæsar, or a Roman Governor, or a Herod was; or what sort of countries Galilee, Samaria, and Judæa were. They knew none of the national, native, and picturesque features of the sacred narrative. I tried to supply this framework, and perhaps I lost myself in it.

The school, I am bound to say, was a really good one of its class, for it was one of Tyler's many good deeds; and I was not a little surprised when, on stepping a second time into Dornford's shoes thirty-six years after, at Plymtree, I found nothing that could be called a village school—the merest 'dame's school,' and no more.

The Moreton Pinckney children of course looked up to any stranger. As almost the only county lady they saw was Lady Dryden, they could hardly be restrained from ladifying every plain Mrs. who came near them. Their pure and sweet old Saxon still

lingers in my ear. Do they still read in the Bible before them, 'The foxen have holes, and the birds of the air have nestis,' as they then did?

The school was but half filled. It had a rival too strong for it. This village of misery and dirt, of cold and nakedness, of pigs and paupers, was the busy seat of a beautiful and delicate manufacture. As many as a hundred and fifty women and girls made pillow lace. On the higher green was the 'lace-making school,' as it was called. Near thirty children were packed in a small room, and kept at their pillows from six in the morning, all the year round, to six in the evening. They were arranged in groups of four or five, round candles, about which were water-bottles so fixed as to concentrate the light on the work of each child. Girls were sent thither from the age of five, on a small weekly payment.

It kept them out of the way in the day, and it prevented the wear and tear of clothes. The food side of the calculation was doubtful, for the parents always said the lacemakers ate more than other children, though it did not do them much good. For a year or two the children earned nothing. They could then make a yard of edging in a week, and, deducting expenses, they got twopence for it. By the time they were eleven or twelve they could earn a shilling or eighteenpence a week. There were women in the village who could not clothe their own children, or present themselves at church, who had made and could still make lace to sell in the shops at 20*s.* or 30*s.* a yard. The more costly lace was generally 'blonde,' that is, made with 'gimp' or silk

thread. The makers were all bound to the dealers by hard terms, so they said, and obliged to buy at the dealers' terms their gimp and thread.

They took great pride in the number and prettiness of their bobbins, making and receiving presents of them, and thinking of the givers as they twirled the bobbins. We took a good deal of the lace, and disposed of it amongst our friends. My youngest sister set up a pillow, and made some yards of good lace. I learnt to be a critic in lace, and an appraiser.

Though all these children were taught to read, and even to write and to sum a little, they were of course very backward, and they soon ceased to do anything but make lace. Here, then, was a difficulty. The school children had no future, except in the Sunday school. An education begun and carried on under the greatest difficulties ended at ten or eleven. The ignorance of the 'young people' was lamentable. It must have been only a week or two after my arrival at Moreton Pinckney that I collected a class of boys and girls that had left school to meet five nights in the week at six o'clock. They came gladly and punctually and regularly, tidying themselves as well as they could. It is idle to expect attention and intelligence from all children, but I never met with more than from these. There were always some who remembered word for word my explanation I had given, and who never wanted either courage or fluency.

My text was the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. I was always shy of theology; perhaps I ought to add, of doctrine; perhaps I ought to add

further, of appeals to the heart. These were College lectures—a very humble form of them. John Christie came and sat by me several evenings, in what year I forget. I remember, however, I made light of the difficulty there is in counting the Twelve Apostles, and that I had accepted the identity of Mary Magdalene with 'the woman that was a sinner,' as easily as the Universal Church had for a thousand years. Christie raised a question on these and some other points. I have since heard that his own parochial teaching was very serious, and very much appreciated.

After a twelvemonth my evening class had got to the Acts of the Apostles, I think it was, and other children had now left the day-school and wanted evening instruction. So I formed a second class, to meet at seven. After another twelvemonth I actually repeated the process, and at least for the best part of a year I had three classes every evening—that is, except Saturday and Sunday. 'What! every evening?' some will say. Yes.

I had gone to Moreton Pinckney full of the ideas which had suggested to Froude our joint service there. I had made up my mind not to entertain, or to keep a carriage, or a horse, though, with my Fellowship added to the living, I could well have taken my place in the Northamptonshire world. I would not have the parsonage new papered or painted. For a dining-table I had an ancient piece of furniture with flaps and a dozen legs, and this on one or two occasions I enlarged by laying upon it the rough deal sides of my organ case. The hardware people at Banbury must have thought me crazy when I insisted

on black-hafted dinner-knives, when ivory cost but a trifle more.

I don't find it easy, or altogether pleasant, to analyse the frame of mind that resulted in such follies, so I leave that to my judicious and candid friends. These privations and humiliations were not much to me. My tastes were simple; my appetite was good; and my legs would carry me right across England if necessary. But my inmates and visitors wanted the means of locomotion, and I will spare my readers a recital of the shifts we were put to.

CHAPTER XCIV.

THE BAPTISTS AND THE CHURCH.

THE Baptist Chapel was a new building when I went to Moreton Pinckney. It must have been built while Mrs. Dornford, the Cambridge lady, and the Genestes were reviving the village in their own way, and when Dornford's Baptist tenant had just come. The Williamses were the chief Baptist family, very good-looking, respectable, educated, and always pleasant. My contemporary record of them runs, '*She* is quite the mother of the Baptist community in M. P.; and a stern mother too—very bitter. *He* is mild, and was once a Churchman. A large and fine family, but all thorough Baptists. The sons preach and pray in the meeting-house.'

Near thirty years after the date of this record I

added a pencil note to it from the mouth of a lace-dealer, one of my New Testament class, who had found me out in Berkshire. It was to the effect that Joseph Williams, one of the sons, had married Mary Anne, daughter of my schoolmaster. What had become of the Church Catechism in this alliance I cannot divine ; but, in that class, it does not much stand in the way. Notwithstanding what I have noted of the old lady's temper and tone, I have to confess that the brilliant exception made by this family to the rest of the parish, in some very important matters, has always given them a high place in my memory and respect. It is a thing I cannot get over, even if I wished it.

Dissenters of course can be very disagreeable, but I have more frequently found them objects of pity, than of jealousy or resentment. They don't know how to carry out their own principles. Their scruples become instincts, which they cannot convert into rational principles. They are apt to get into a quarrel with all mankind, and of course punish themselves far more than the rest of the world.

Bet Brown and her husband Thomas were religious people. They had been so shocked by the conversation and manners of Moreton Pinckney, that they had taken refuge in a damp and dirty little Zoar, in a hollow of Costidge, the name of a rough and swampy common stretching westward from the village. A large family had perished from the unhealthiness of the site, and one only remained, a young woman, who, I believe, died soon after my time. Bet Brown was always glad to see the clergyman ; but

it was to teach, not to be taught. There were religious meetings held in the neighbourhood every Sunday morning, for the ostensible purpose of asking the Divine blessing on all ministers and congregations. I should now let people do this if they liked; but I then deemed it an ecclesiastical offence, and therefore wrong. Thinking it, I said it also. Poor Bet, I daresay, gave me the benefit of a charitable construction.

In the brief period of my residence there were many sad incidents, some heroic examples, and much that one remembers if only for its strangeness. Mrs. Kirby, a very quiet, silent woman, nursed for many months a husband sinking with some internal complaint. He died. The day after his death a cart drew up at the door, bringing from a Northampton inn a daughter struck down with fever. She died the next day. I buried father and daughter in the same grave, the poor mother looking a statue of helpless and hopeless sorrow.

A handsome man, with a dignified bearing, was suffering more than a year the gradual progress of a cancer over his very fine face. Hiding it with a sort of curtain, he still came to church. He could not prevent it reaching the senses, and he had to stay at home. His next door neighbour, a good woman who was only a neighbour, attended to him from first to last, whether remunerated for it I cannot remember. He did not die till half his face and tongue had been destroyed, and for months the odour, even for a short time, was as much as one could stand. But his neighbour seemed really to grieve his departure, as if a

great object of life had gone. He was always most patient, most uncomplaining, and most grateful.

Both at the chapel and in private the Baptist minister spoke respectfully and kindly both of the Church and of its ministers. He did not live in the place, so I could not call on him ; but I said on some occasion that I should be glad to see him, and he called several times. He was very respectful, fully recognising my position, but holding that, in the actual state of things, there was room for him, and for more than the Church could or would do. The general state of things was very bad, and the Church could not, or would not, set about seriously to mend it. He let out that there were disagreeables in his own position, and that he envied my comparative independence.

It dawned upon me, and became a settled belief, that he desired some opportunity of studying for orders in the Church, or at least of inquiring for himself. Though a plain man, there was no reason, as far as I can remember, why he should not have done this with success; and if these conversations had taken place when I had a little money in my pocket, I might have tried to plan it for him. As his theological views, apart from the ecclesiastical question, were determined and strong, I can hardly guess what the attempt might have come to ; but his position was really that of the Evangelical clergy generally, and he would not have been more out of place in the Church of England than many good men whom I may think inconsistent, but whom I have no wish to excommunicate.

CHAPTER XCV.

TWO VILLAGE DOCTORS.

AT my first call at Canon's Ashby I met a fine, handsome man, with a little too much flourish, talking away pleasantly enough. When he had taken leave, Lady Dryden said, 'That's our doctor, Mr. Mozley. I didn't introduce him, for he will introduce himself shortly. We really don't know what to say about him. You'll have to draw your own conclusions. It's a very strange story.' I had heard something of it, and I had seen the man dashing rapidly through the village on a piebald horse. He had come to the neighbouring village of Eydon only three or four years before as apprentice or assistant to the medical man of the village and neighbourhood. The latter had been declining, but he now began to sink rapidly. He died, leaving his business, his wife, and his son in charge of the new-comer, who took sole charge of the business, and in a few months married the widow, about double his age.

It was in this stage of his history that I became acquainted with him. The death of the husband and the marriage of the widow had been too quick for the look of the thing. The man who had thus rapidly and easily won a good position soon found that it brought cares. The wife began to fail first; the son took to drinking, and became a dipsomaniac. They locked the cellar, but he smuggled in drink; they locked him up, but he got out of the window,

and made his way to where drink could be got. The worry and the scandal became terrible. In a drunken fit the youth died. The mother, fond as she was of her new husband, and devoted as he was to her, fretted and moped, especially as his practice compelled him to leave her much alone, and there was nobody else to comfort her. In a few months she followed her first husband and son.

The survivor enjoyed unabated repute and popularity, and there was not much in his manner to indicate that his career had been so sadly chequered, and that he stood on three recent graves. However, he wished to change the scene. He advertised and sold the practice, and went at once to the Isle of Wight, where he married very shortly a beautiful young lady, as she was described to me, with a large fortune. I heard of them from time to time. They had a numerous family, and, for anything I know, they enjoyed for the remainder of their days that uninterrupted happiness which is generally supposed to be the special reward of a romantic and long-tried attachment. The Drydens, who had qualms about the earlier stages of this gentleman's career, must have come to the conclusion that the stars were fighting for him, and that it was of no use to scrutinise what was beyond comprehension.

The successor—that is, the purchaser of the practice—soon made his appearance. By a purple mark on his delicate complexion I at once identified him as an Oxford lad, the son of an alderman, whose face I had been familiar with in his childhood. I had a toothache and wanted the tooth extracted. So I had the

new doctor called in the next time he was seen in the village. He examined my mouth, and promised to bring his instruments next day. He came, and proceeded to make play with his forceps: 'Pray excuse me,' he said; 'this is the first time I have had to draw a tooth from a living subject. Would you mind lying down on your back on the floor?' This I did immediately, when the operation was performed with complete success.

CHAPTER XCVI.

A RURAL POPULATION.

How are these populations formed? When we speak of the peasantry, or the rural poor, what do we suppose to be their origin and their prevailing elements? I learnt something on these points at Moreton Pinckney. The tradition of language and manners might go far back, but the modes of accretion to the general mass were remarkable. The two most common names in the village were Prestidge and Talbot, respectively from common ancestors. The common ancestress of nearly all the most numerous clan was not only within memory, but actually extant.

A few Sundays after my arrival, upon my coming home from evening service, I was told that Edward Franklin wished to see me. Going towards the front door I was just in time to see a short, lame, elderly man, with a sweet and tender expression, performing

a feat of some difficulty. A bright new oilcloth had been laid in the passage, leaving on each side a breadth of stone floor, which my servant had carefully whitened. The old man was springing from side to side so as to avoid bringing his hobnails in contact with the oilcloth. Of course he was leaving his marks on the stone. Taking him into the parlour I asked him to be seated.

He opened his case quickly. He wanted to be married to Elizabeth Prestidge. Upon my asking a question or two, he let out that there were difficulties. Tyler and Dornford had both refused to marry them, he thought very unreasonably. The poor woman's husband had been transported twenty or thirty years before, and, though his term had long since expired, he had not returned, and had never shown any wish to return. It was now some years since he had been heard of, and nobody could say that he was still living. Such was his story. I could only answer that I would make inquiries.

The heads of the parish thought it a hard case, and if I had performed the marriage at my own risk they would have felt obliged to me. But they had to confess that the provoking wretch of a husband was occasionally meeting with old acquaintances serving their times at 'Botany Bay,' and had always inquired after his wife—the inquiry of course reported in their next letter home. Somebody had seen him, they said, only three or four years before this.

Upon my declining to marry the couple, another question presented itself. She had been living as his housekeeper in their little cottage of two rooms now

for many years. My best and wisest people advised me not to interfere. I had not at first identified the object of this long attachment; but I did soon, for I must have seen her, and much admired her, every day from my arrival. I frequently saw from my window a tall, thin, singularly upright, graceful figure, twirling a mop before a cottage door. A hundred yards off, she might still be thought young. She was near eighty, and, including husbands and wives, had a hundred descendants. She was the mother of most of the Prestidges, including five large families bearing her name. Her unhappy suitor, or whatever else he was to be called, had several sons with families, the best of them one of our two carriers. Kimnel Prestidge was an outsider of the clan. He had been christened Kimnel after his father, and he had his son christened Kimnel. Upon inquiry I was told that if everybody had his own, his family would have a large property called Kimnel; but I don't think they even knew where it was. Should any of the family ever come into the possession of money, then they hoped he would be able to recover house and land. As I cannot find that there is any such place, I fear they had lost their only clue to this supposed inheritance—the right spelling of the name.

The Talbots counted for some sixty or seventy, and were believed to be of gipsy extraction. Their dark eyes, their fiery tempers, their wild independent ways, seemed to prove an exotic origin. But I must reserve them for a separate chapter.

The gipsies then kept the Northamptonshire farmers in continual terror. Tribes of them roamed

about the broad grass lanes, as freely as if they had been lords of the soil. Nehemiah Smith went about with forty horses of one sort or another. The adjoining parish of Sulgrave, the old home of the Washington family, owed about a hundred and fifty of the names on its roll of possible paupers to a gipsy, in the last century, having, one hard winter, brought his wife from the camp into a cottage for her confinement. Green lanes ran nearly round the parish of Moreton Pinckney. It had not been enclosed till the surrounding parishes had established rights of road along its whole circumference, as far as I can remember.

There were always gipsies in this grassy *enceinte*, and one Sunday I was told that a party of gipsies were bringing a child to be baptised. I went on the belief that I was bound to baptise every child brought to the font. The farmers were much disturbed about it, and wished, if possible, that the child might not be registered as born in the parish. The registration, however, would only testify to the present habitation of the child, which would not 'parish' it.

These English Bedouins had little respect for boundaries, not to say property. They crossed the fields everywhere, laying their hands on everything that came in their way. The mother of a tribe was warned out of a field by our neighbour at the old Manor House, when she replied, 'I walked across this field before you were born, and I shall walk across it when you are dead!'

I can recall no parish which, for its size, contained so great a variety of classes and conditions. The

fact was brought before me in a very distinct form when, upon Lord Althorpe succeeding to the peerage in 1834, Sir C. Knightley stood for our division of the county. I received a request to accompany his agent round the parish, and to give my weight for him. In a population of about six hundred, there were fifty-one electors, and from these I obtained forty-nine promises. The Church had little to do with the matter, for, if I remember right, even the few Dissenters were ready to vote for Sir Charles. The Corn Laws and Protection generally were the one absorbing question. I do not think that at that date I had ever for one moment questioned their wisdom and justice; and, at the time I am writing about, the burdens on land—first and foremost the Church and the Poor—seemed to necessitate some kind of legislative compensation. But the fact is I did not give a moment's thought to the matter, though I instinctively recoiled from the Conservative watchword, 'Church and Land,' which seemed to convey its own condemnation. My round of the parish with the agent was but a formal affair, especially as my promises had been received already.

Sir Charles was elected without opposition, and he then had to go round and thank the electors; and I was asked to accompany him. The people all put on their Sunday clothes, had their houses in apple-pie order, and posed themselves with some skill. Some made it a point to have a pipe in their mouths, and many offered beer. They were anxious to prove that they knew the stake at issue; but there was no bitterness that I remember. Sir Charles himself had been

a warm politician. It was said that he had recently taken the thatch off a cottage at Preston Capes, because the Baptist tenant would hold meetings in it, and could not otherwise be got out.

He had a very noisy quarrel with Lord Althorpe, and had ceased to send his fat beasts to the Smithfield Cattle Show. Oilcake was forbidden, but Sir C. or some friend had taken a piece of cake out of his pocket and offered it to one of Lord Althorpe's exhibits, when the animal devoured it eagerly, which it would not have done upon first acquaintance, so it was said.

My own reward for my political services came soon. I was invited to Fawsley. Most of the talk then was about the London and Birmingham Railway, then making a fearful gash through the county. Litchfield was the chief talker. The landowners had made common cause with the corporation of Northampton, and, under the direction of its leading men, were standing out for high compensation, which they felt sure of getting. What I am about to relate may be a wicked invention, but it certainly is what I was told. The landowners were informed that the corporation had found it prudent to abate considerably from its claims, and to take what it could get. They were advised to follow the example set them, and they did. By-and-by it transpired that the corporation had got all that it had asked for, but on the condition that it should publish a lower scale of receipts, and regard the difference as a private transaction. Valentine Knightley sat at table; Rainald came in at dessert.

As I remember, only one farmer in my village seemed to have political differences with Sir Charles. He was a very good, sensible Churchman, and he did not seem likely to press his objections so far as not to vote for Sir Charles. At the time I could not make out the objection. It was simple blindness on my part. Mr. Humphreys had got an inkling of free trade.

CHAPTER XCVII.

JOHN ADAMS.

BUT to return to my family of interesting, clever, and, some of them, very good-looking pupils, increasing by a dozen a year. You can hardly look at children without having to pay for it. If you encroach on the parental monopoly of enjoyment you must expect to share their costs and pains. Whatever gets to the heart gets to the purse also. Some of these were the children of farmers, or of people subsisting on a small independence; but most of them, and I think the cleverest and brightest, were from pauper homes—indeed themselves paupers, counting in the head-money. I was soon made acquainted with the difficulties, the debts, the hardships of all these families, and the many things to be found out of scanty means. The number of these appeals to my kindness compelled some investigation, and I obtained, and still possess, many pages of household accounts and other domestic particulars. Here, as everywhere, there were

many forms and phases of destitution. They must occur. They will not be provided against, even if it be possible. The women and children are the chief sufferers, and they are more or less irresponsible for it. I never could resist such appeals so long as I had a sixpence in my pocket or a few pounds shortly coming to me.

But here comes the worst plague of Christian civilisation: the foul dragon to be crushed or chained, the scandal of charity. I drag him to the front, and I name a specimen, in order that the wise and good and strong may do better work upon his carcass than I have ever done. The wolf has been extirpated. The wild boar no longer breaks the fence and roots up the planted ground. Even the highway robber is now a romantic legend. A direr pest than all remains — the Harpago of rural life, indomitable, ineradicable, left by Providence, it might almost seem, for the punishment, and even destruction, of the foolish and soft-hearted.

Here is a fellow, big, handsome, strong of limb, ready-spoken, and with brains that answer his purpose, who finds there are people who care for his wife and children. He has married, very probably, the prettiest woman in the village, and her children are like her. Whatever he may do, or fail to do, he knows that they will not entirely want for food and clothing. Night after night, day after day, early and late, earlier still, later still, he is sotting at the public-house, neglecting his employment, disqualifying himself for it, and losing his employers or his customers.

On my arrival at Moreton Pinckney Dornford and

his curate recommended to my immediate attention John Adams, such a man as I have described, a blacksmith, said to have been much tried by the labour of the smithy, to spit blood, and to be threatened with decline. With his bass-viol, or with the parish's bass-viol, and a very harsh and powerful voice, he was the most prominent figure in the singing-gallery. His wife was said to be dying of consumption, and she looked it. Like all violent and selfish men he had the expression of suffering much at the hands of a wicked world. Being a tradesman he was not on the parish. I maintained him and his wife and family for I know not how many weeks.

Suddenly he transferred his smithy to another blacksmith, to whom he sold all his tools, and with the proceeds went off to New York, leaving his family to me and the parish. I cannot remember whether his poor wife died before or after that. The yellow fever was at New York, and a cordon was round the city. There was no work to be got in it, and no getting out of it. He returned.

He was now without tools, or the means of living. He persuaded me to supply him with the requisites of his trade and to reinstate him in the old smithy. This would be upon some understanding with his temporary successor, to whom he would have to pay rent. He had come back to Moreton Pinckney, and to his old ways, for he was always at the public-house, and I soon heard the measure he had taken of his benefactor. He had boasted that he could get anything out of me.

On Newman's return from Sicily, in July, 1833,

hardly yet quite recovered from a fever, he had found it necessary to have his head shaved for some time, to bring back the hair to its normal condition. It answered. My head was betraying premature baldness, and Newman recommended me to follow his example, and to wear a wig for a time. Spiers fell readily into the idea, and I soon looked as like George IV. on his coins as my physiognomy would allow. For a year I persevered. But there was only one barber in my village, Thomas Gilks, who was a sawyer also. I had to submit myself weekly to his rather rough handling.

One evening I heard a great row; indeed, the servants came to warn me something dreadful might happen. I went out and found all the village assembled in the front of Gilks's house, with the village constable holding up his long blue staff of office in solemn state. It appeared that Adams and Gilks had come to sore grief at the public-house, when the people there hustled the latter out of the place, and shut him up in his own cottage, for he was very much the older man, and must have been worsted in a fight. But he was now presenting himself at his bedroom window, keeping up a pretty equal war of words with his equally drunken antagonist. It was dark, and neither of them was aware of my presence on the scene. Almost the first words I heard were from Adams, who respected a sawyer, but not a barber: 'There, take your dish, and shave the parson.' Gilks evidently felt it a home-thrust, and the people thought it rather a good joke. I may as well add that Gilks's weekly labours, and my sufferings, were all in vain,

for when I gave my hair free scope it was soon as before.

Either in my absence, or in one long night, John Adams unexpectedly established himself on the road-side, on the Upper Green, at a point where it was specially necessary there should be nc obstruction or nuisance. I expostulated in vain. He was soon at work in his new smithy, the furnace of which glared right in the eyes of horses immediately on their turning into the Green. I inquired of the village authorities, who resented the aggression as much as I did. Nothing was to be done without the Manor, to which all the open ground belonged; and various instances of successful aggression were pointed out. I must speak to the steward at the annual court. He came. He could not speak to anybody till the court was opened; and when the court was opened, he could do nothing but attend to the business of the court, which seemed to consist in receiving and entering mere nominal sums under the name of quit-rents.

I waited as patiently as Aladdin's mother did forty days with her son's present to the Caliph. The 'business' over, I began to open my case. He had nothing to do with that. His business was to collect quit-rents. The smithy was there, and a year's quit-rent paid for it. Putting his books into a bag, he mounted his trap and was off.

The successful spoiler of the common right had quickly and easily supplied the place of his poor wife. The fresh victim was the daughter of the tailor, from whom also he had borrowed large sums, repaying nothing. The only excuse for the man was that he was

just like his father before him, and that the whole family were one worse than another. Two of the sisters, who had been handsome girls, returned from the streets of Leamington to die in their native village, and I had to attend them, not told, but only suspecting the true state of the case. Not long after I left, John Adams, so my Derby friends heard, went off suddenly to Birmingham, taking the parish 'base vile' with him.

CHAPTER XCVIII.

JOHN STOCKLEY.

JOHN STOCKLEY was the pleasantest picture in the village. He still shines and smiles upon me with his clear complexion, his bright eyes, his finely formed features, and the bits of humour playing about the corners of his mouth. He had been the chief friend, the churchwarden, and the trusted adviser of Dornford, of Tyler, and of their predecessors. He had a very distinct recollection of Gilbert White, who used to come annually to receive his rent, and whom he described as a pleasant, quiet man, easy to get on with

While a mere youth—it would be about 1770—he had taken care of the clergyman's horse when he came upon any duty, and had done him other small services. The incumbent gave him the use of the churchyard, and Stockley put two lambs in it, which soon became sheep. Repeating this process several times, he purchased a cow, but had some difficulty in getting

pasture for it. A field at the neighbouring village of Culworth was to be let, and Stockley took it. The distance was quite two miles, but Stockley thought nothing of the walk twice a day, bringing back a pailful of milk. To his dismay, the milk gave little cream and no butter. It might be an accident: something amiss with the cow; but it continued. On his disburdening himself to the people at Culworth, they laughed in his face. The field had always yielded plenty of milk, but no cream or butter to speak of. Culworth Church stands high, the field lay north of it, with a downward slope, and was rather springy and spongy. The grass was always rank.

People are apt to think themselves pretty safe with cowkeeping. In horseflesh, of course, you must always be on your guard, but you seem to be quite in another element when you set up a dairy. I remember a poor neighbour bringing home from a fair a fine cow with every indication of a good milker. The next morning she was dry. She had the trick of milking herself. Another poor man brought home a cow and calf, the latter to warrant the condition of the former. In fact they had nothing to say to one another, as the purchaser had observed to his surprise on the road. The cow had never been in calf.

After a time Stockley got better pasture nearer home. He married a good wife, but never had any children, and always had the reputation of taking to people and being kind to them. He had now lost his wife. He had adopted Jesse Goodridge, who had married his niece, and was to succeed to his property.

From this, however, there was one very valuable

reserve. Stockley, having now given up farming, occupied a pretty little cottage, with a large orchard, close to the parsonage, which itself was sadly cramped for room. Either by will or by deed he had given this to the living.

Whenever I passed the cottage in the long winter evenings, I used to hear his voice, clear and strong, as if carrying on an animated conversation, insomuch that I could hardly believe but that he had a friend with him. As I approached the cottage through the orchard the voice stopped. I knocked and walked in. There was nobody but Stockley, with a large Bible open before him, a candle, and his deceased wife's cat sitting up on a chair as if conscious of a solemnity.

The best men can lose their tempers on adequate provocation. Stockley could. His trial was the horrible language of the village boys, mere urchins some of them, as they played on the road, which was sunk deep under his orchard. On one occasion he rushed out, seized a little blackguard, and, I grieve to say, very nearly tore one of his ears off. There was a great fuss about it. However, the boy had better lose both his ears, and his eyes too, than go on blaspheming all his days.

From the smoky rafter of Stockley's kitchen hung a pair of perfectly new, well-made top-boots. He would occasionally make some humorous allusion to their cost. It was 200*l.* In the days of Tyler and of Dornford, the best-known man in the village and neighbourhood was one James Jones, who to his original trade of shoemaking had added farming, political and religious agitations, and general inter-

ference with other people's affairs. His father had a farm. He had a brother who was carrier to Wellingborough. He had a son and several daughters, all handsome, clever, and with some education. Mr. Shaw, the curate-in-charge before my time, told me that the pretty looks of the Miss Joneses, sitting as they did just under the reading-desk, seriously disturbed his public devotions. Jones was to succeed his father, and on the strength of it he contracted a large amount of debts. This was on the security of the stock, for he made his father join, probably in some informal way. He made Stockley the present I have described, and not long after asked for the temporary loan of 200*l.*, which Stockley granted.

Very shortly after that he and all his own family went off to the United States, sorely against the wishes of his son, who was leaving his heart behind him. They had to encounter extreme difficulties and hardships in America, but were cheered by the hope of return, which would depend on the father's death and will.

When pining and sickening, the youth went afoot many miles to the post office. There was a letter for him. It was to say that his grandfather had died and had left everything to his uncle the Wellingborough carrier. This had been effected by a very suspicious alteration of the old man's will, made *in articulo mortis*. The poor youth brought the letter to his father's log-hut, sat down, and died. The carrier managed to repudiate all the debts, including Stockley's, and to establish himself at Moreton Pinckney. The very day he accomplished this he

suddenly died. His widow was there in my time, with clever and good-looking children, but Moreton Pinckney people had come to be rather shy of the name.

The history of Queen Anne's Bounty land is a literature, if the sufferers would contribute their respective experiences. It is a record of wasted money, wasted time, wasted patience, and, so far as the managers of that fund are concerned, wasted forecast and wasted principle. My share of this infliction lay at Prior's Marston, in Warwickshire, about twenty miles off. The expected annual rent was 16*l.* The tenant was very much behindhand, and would only bring a portion of his rent due, after repeated reminders. He then brought a doleful account of the land and the buildings. I had to return something. I find I put it down as an average of 2*l.*, but I think this must have been what I recommended to my successors, not exactly my own experience.

Stockley bore out the poor man's story, and suggested a visit. So he and I rode to Prior's Marston. I never saw stiffer clay, or worse buildings, or more misery. The tenant offered us of his best—coarse bread, hard cheese, rancid butter, green bacon, and beer which I am always reminded of when I read poor Henry VI.'s mention of the 'thin drink' which in his time was part of the shepherd's lot. Both the man and his wife had been in gentlemen's service, and this was what they had come to—this the price of independence.

The lay reader will ask how it was that such a bit of land ever came to be attached to the living of

Moreton Pinckney. He may ask, and ask in vain, and he may ask it of many other livings. The office proceeds on the sentimental idea that land—land, whatever its quality, situation, acreage, or distance—is a better investment than money in the long run—that is, in the course of centuries. If the governors of the Bounty office would have the goodness, or the sense, to confine their calculations to one century, they would find that the sale of all the Bounty land would bring into the Church, to be used in one way or another, perhaps twice the present income, adding that much to the present as well as to the future resources of the Church.

When my father came to visit me, he found a small property in the parish on sale. He always had a fancy for land, and in this case I expect the purchase would be on my account. He consulted Stockley, and had his answer quick and decided: 'Have nothing to do with bad land, which this is. You can't do anything with it, for it gets out of condition at once. You can't sell it. Good land keeps itself in order, and always fetches a good price.' The estate was at the outskirts of the parish, and had no 'residentiary' attraction.

I cannot remember any life that was so much the carrying out of one simple idea as John Stockley's. With nothing whatever to gain by it, without schemes in his head, without the excitement of party strife, he was from boyhood to old age the clergyman's help, friend, and adviser. His rule was to maintain peace, and act evenly with all sides. He was rather averse to alterations, simply because people had got attached

to things as they were, and it was not worth while to hurt their feelings.

When I came to Moreton Pinckney, the chancel was separated from the nave by a boarding which filled up the arch. On the nave side was painted, on an immense scale, the royal arms of the date of Charles II. I wished to open the chancel to the nave. With a little hesitation Stockley consented, though he felt the church would not be so home-like without the partition. When the demolition took place, I was sorry to find that it involved the removal of an ancient oak beam, beautifully moulded, that had been part of a rood loft. When it was got out of its sockets on either side, we found in one of them a boy's whipping-top, that would be about four centuries old, no doubt inserted by the caprice of a workman or of his child.

Then came another trouble. The Commandments, Prayers, Belief, and a dozen texts had been done in black on the walls, and had long been the principal difficulty in the periodical cleaning of the church. Stockley consented to their being washed out; but he venerated them, texts and all, so I had to supply their place. I had them all done on panels at Oxford, and of course had a handsome sum to pay for them. Think of my disgust when upon their arrival I found the Oxford people had run half of the Fourth Commandment into the second Table of the Law. They might, however, have made a worse blunder, for, in fact, the Fourth Commandment does carry our duty to God into our social relations.

CHAPTER XCIX.

THE TALBOTS.

THE Talbot clan contained some remarkable specimens. George was a gigantic fellow—a well-sinker and excavator. He did not make much appearance at Moreton Pinckney; indeed, it was said that he had married one or more wives besides the one on duty there. She might be supposed a match for him, for in a terrible quarrel she had run a knife right through his arm. He was in prison part of my time for deserting his family. His mother took it much to heart, and when I was expecting some sentimental explanation of her sorrow, told me she knew what the prison allowance of bread was, and that George would starve on it.

There were two Phillis Talbots, one old, and the other still young, but the mother of a large family. She was, and she remained for many years, a name dear to my Derby friends. My contemporary note of the family is, 'a delicate and very interesting woman. *He* is well-intentioned, but weak of purpose. A large family. Very poor.' Her voice and utterance told for her as much as her looks. She was one of the best lace-makers in the village: but to think of the darkness, damp, and dirt her beautiful fabrics came out of, and the rough cubs all round her 'pillow'! In her early days she had made lace that fetched 25*s.* or 30*s.* a yard. We saw bits of it. Some of her children were of my evening classes, and they were sure

of help. Her cottage, in Hog Lane, belonged to some one who could not afford a penny for the repair of the thatch, and it was a mass of rot. I remember her describing a stormy night. As she lay in bed something dropped upon her face, and, when she felt for it, was cold and clammy. She got up and struck a light, and, 'Oh, ma'am,' she said to my mother or sister, 'it was a newt!'

For some years we sent her an annual present, but had to stop it for a very sad reason, of which I never heard the full particulars. One or two of her sons were in the employment of shoemakers at Northampton, or one of the other seats of that trade. They brought home boots and shoes, which poor Phillis took, and used or sold. She had to suffer a term of imprisonment as a receiver of stolen goods.

It must be explained, however, that in those days the truck system was universal, at least among all the lower class of manufacturers. The makers of any article whatever would say to their workpeople at the end of the week or fortnight, 'We haven't the money to pay you the whole of your wages; we cannot find sale, or our customers will not pay. So take, at cost price, some of the things you have made, and sell them yourselves if you can.'

The practice was the subject of long discussions in Parliament for many years, and had more advocates than might be now supposed. One of the chief objections was the opportunity it gave the workpeople for robbing their employers. They carried about goods which they said had been given them in lieu of money wages; and, as the practice was uni-

versal, they were not suspected, nor could a suspicion have been followed up. In the matter of lace it continually occurred that when the makers had every reason to believe the dealers would take their work on existing terms, they found they had themselves to find purchasers on whatever terms they could. In those days law was invoked much more freely for the protection of trade than it is now, when manufacturers and dealers are told to take care of themselves.

On turning over the leaves of the parish register, I have often had reason to suspect that fine ladies and gentlemen had interfered a good deal in the choice of names for their dependents. In a neighbouring churchyard I found the name Amphillis, evidently Ann Phillis, the *n* being changed into *m* after the Greek usage.

CHAPTER C.

GAMEKEEPER OR POACHER.

THE Gilkses were a clan rather of the old lower middle-class type; good-looking, well-mannered, and educated. John Gilks, in his green velveteen suit, was the most ornamental figure in the village when I came. He was evidently a gamekeeper in office, and a poacher out of it. His ostensible livelihood was breaking dogs, and jobbing in dogs and guns.

It was not till I had been some time at Moreton Pinckney that I heard of one of his many adventures. A gentleman entrusted him to sell two sporting

dogs, and told him he would find buyers at Oxford. He returned with neither money nor dogs. He had heard, he said, of a gentleman that wanted the dogs and wished to see them. He took them to a college, up a staircase, and on his knocking at the door it was opened by the gentleman himself in his cap and gown, when the dogs were so frightened that they jumped out of the staircase window, which was unfortunately open, and broke their necks on the gravel below.

Before I had heard this story Gilks came one day and asked for leave to shoot over the glebe. I was sure there was no game in the glebe, so I replied that if the tenant was agreeable I had no objection. The tenant, he said, was quite agreeable. Would I then give him written permission? I wrote a permission on a page of note-paper. Upon signing my name, I began to feel a qualm as to the propriety and significance of the act, and I said to myself I cannot withdraw, but I will be exact. So at the left hand corner of the page I wrote the date. I was afterwards told I had done a foolish thing, and possibly I may have said I should not repeat it.

Some time after this, Gilks with his gun was following some sportsmen to pick up any birds that their guns might drive into the road or the glebe. They had him up for shooting without a licence or certificate. The law of the case I never knew; but I believe Gilks was on the public road, which there ran through the glebe. The magistrates asked if he had a certificate. He produced my bit of note-paper. They immediately noticed that he had torn off the left hand

foot of the page, and this they knew would probably be the date. He would give no account of it. Finding him dumbfounded, they at once sent him to prison for two months. I thought it hard justice, and very likely not quite sound, but by that time I had heard too much of the man's rogueries to feel any sympathy for him.

To stickle for justice in behalf of either gamekeepers or poachers may be thought needless; but they seem to me interesting subjects for social, and even ethnological inquiry. They represent the hunting-man of the prehistoric age; the hunter of all animals, man included, by land and sea. A friend of mine some years ago found himself on the scent of a very curious discovery. A well-known clergyman, and a great authority on nature and on sport, sent a man to him with a recommendatory letter. Halfacre was the man's name, and he wished for employment as sub-keeper, or in some like capacity. My friend had to consult his keepers, who were aghast at the threatened intrusion. The man was a notorious poacher, and only wanted to be initiated into all the secrets of the covers and preserves. It suggests itself that if he now became a reformed character, and did his duty to his new employer, it might be worse for the existing staff. However, my friend had recently heard of a gamekeeper wanted twenty miles off, and Halfacre went there. As it happened, some time after his departure, a good many foxes were poisoned on my friend's property, and it was suggested that Halfacre had done it, the distance being no impediment, in order to get my friend, or his gamekeepers, into trouble. My friend had been much struck by the man's figure,

which was quite out of everyday life; and upon making inquiries, found that the family had borne the same character for as long as could be remembered.

Looking into some historical work soon after this he came upon Harfaga, a famous Scandinavian chief, and the similarity of the two characters suggested the identity of the name. I think my friend had a certain preference for Danes and Norwegians, in comparison with the domestic, servile, and unadventurous Saxon. He did not, however, send for the descendant of Norwegian kings to take care of his pheasants. The impulse of this interesting discovery he carried no farther. I feel sure that both Harfaga and Halfacre were descended from the Harpies, so called from their fair hair (hair-fair), or from their white linen sails, who were in fact Scandinavian pirates, who found their way into the Mediterranean, and wherever they could put in their claws—that is, their anchors—and devoured or spoilt all that they could lay their hands on.

CHAPTER CI.

STRUGGLES FOR LIFE.

THE children came to my schools, or to my evening classes: the old people were out of my hand, and beyond my means: the families I could help a little. The class that most concerned me, perhaps most needlessly, was the young men's, say from eighteen to five-and-twenty. Young unmarried men could not

get more than five shillings a week, to the best of my recollection. It was sometimes even less. They seemed to have no openings, not even the opportunity of learning how to better themselves. They could not even keep themselves in full health and strength on such poor wages. . . . .

While I was thinking over many expedients, I saw an advertisement in a Derby paper inviting strong young men to apply to some well-known stone quarries at Little Eaton, about three miles north of Derby. The advertiser promised full work and good wages. I communicated with him, and received directions to send three of my young men to an address at Derby, where they would be directed to the quarries. The distance would be not more than seventy miles. I could then have walked it myself, without the least fatigue, in two days. I started them early on Monday morning, so arranging the journey that they might arrive at Little Eaton about four on Wednesday afternoon. When I told Stockley what I had done, he at once asked how much money I had given them. I told him. 'Oh, that's for a return journey,' he said. 'You'll have them all back on Saturday.' So said all the parish, and so it came to pass.

The men were back by Saturday night, giving a terrible account of the trap I had laid for them. The quarries they described as the very jaws of hell, and the quarrymen just what you might expect at such a place. They were told that life was very short there, and very cheap; and that men were wanted because so many had been killed or disabled lately.

A man was pointed out to them who had that morning married the widow of a poor fellow killed only the day before, and every woman was known to have some one waiting for her. The sun was always burning your back as you worked; you could not work without drink, and if you drank you were soon killed and forgotten. The fierce looks of the men suggested other fears. So early on Thursday they had turned their faces home to dear Northamptonshire, where life at least was precious, and could be called your own. They did not even report themselves.

I had to defend myself from the charge of sending my parishioners to utter destruction. I had spent many and many an hour in those quarries from early boyhood, watching the quarrymen at their work, or picking blackberries. But the narratives brought home by these men were too vivid in comparison with my own tame and feeble experiences; and, even if I had tried, I could not have sent a man to Derbyshire again.

Even at Moreton Pinckney, in spite of the Poor Laws, there was a true struggle for existence, with desperate energy, with strange enterprise, and some odd results. If lads of twelve could get rigged out, they went to Leamington, and found employment with the many people concerned in the building trade. With difficulties and hardships, with much longer hours of work than they had known, and always with some accidents by cart-wheels or horses' legs, they got on; and in a year or two would visit their friends, much changed for the better, and proud to show it.

Shopkeeping, in ever so small a way, was generally the first start. Maria Prestidge is still to me the personation of a fierce struggle with hard lines. She had a large family, and, taking the lead in their affairs, she left to her husband the name of Ria's Thomas, and I never heard him called by any other name. He got what work he could on low wages. She had her shop well supplied with everything a cottager usually wanted. She could not read or write, and I am not sure she could even master all the numerals. But she had a memory, and could make hieroglyphics for the occasion.

Taking down her slate of memoranda one day, the only mark I could decipher was a large *M* in one corner, and thinking it possible my housekeeper might have got something at her shop, asked who it stood for. It was Master Bazeley, the only tailor in the village, and almost next door to her.

When I went to Moreton Pinckney in 1832, there were still four old women regularly at work with the old spinning-jenny. It is now only to be seen in curiosity shops, or in very old lumber-rooms. So little is it known, indeed, that I see a very well-informed writer talks of spinning-jennies for making lace. The only possible warrant he can have for the idea must be in the very curious names given to the three Fates. 'Clotho,' I suppose, must refer to cloth; and 'Lachesis,' to lace or net; yet the two ladies had nothing to make either cloth or lace with but the two sticks of the distaff.

I was invited to take some of the Moreton Pinckney yarn, and, finding I could get it woven into bed-

linen at a neighbouring village, I bought enough to make several pairs of sheets. I had them for near thirty years, when my servants rebelled against them, alleging that they were cold and hard. So after being used for ironing some time, they were cut up into dusters and clouts.

Quite in a hole opposite Stockley, and within calling distance of the parsonage, was Hannah Costford, keeping the smallest of sweetie shops, in the smallest of freeholds. She had all the gossip of the village at her tongue's end, and many a tale of the past very like the present. How had she been cheated with diluted essence of peppermint! How had she lost her market by rival vendors of specious or resuscitated oranges! In her younger days she had usually kept a great three days' fair, nine miles off. Early each morning she used to walk to the fair, carrying on her head a large tray heavily charged with cakes and sweets. In the evening she walked back with the empty tray, which, with the aid of a younger assistant, she filled for the next morning. This she did three days running, and spoke of it as nothing extraordinary.

It may serve as a date to mention that, upon the annual settlement of the clothing fund, she earnestly deprecated a red cloak, and asked for a fashionable grey. This she got, and looked quite genteel, and even young.

As in every village I have known, there were labourers who had been well-to-do farmers, or were the sons of farmers, or, what was worse, were evidently of gentle birth, as both their names and their looks

showed. They could not adapt themselves to the condition of service, or stand continuous labour. Such were the Freemantles. To one I lent several sums to help him in shoemaking, and never saw them again. Another of the name came into a few pounds, and went up to town, for the first time in his life, to make his fortune. In two or three weeks he returned with a large box of oranges, the carriage of which must have cost him something. These he exhibited in his mother's shop-window, to the admiration of the schoolchildren, who only wished they had pence in their pockets. In three or four days I met him carrying by a yoke two pails full of rotten oranges, which he was taking to a small piece of very bad land two miles off, where he was keeping a few pigs.

That any one should come to Moreton Pinckney to make his fortune may seem strange indeed. Yet there did come a young, good-looking tinker, who opened a shop, and soon had plenty of small jobs in hand. I introduced myself to him, and was welcome. He came to church once or twice. But he was neither for the church nor for the chapel. At all the religious meetings he read of in the New Testament, several persons preached and prayed; indeed, any one who felt disposed. He wished to see this still. The 'one man system' was what he objected to. If I remember right, he did preach and pray himself on some occasions, but was not acceptable to the hearers. After doing, I expect, a good deal more work than he was paid for, he left Moreton Pinckney. It is fortunate that theological critics are generally bad performers, for if their success corre-

sponded to their acumen, there would be not a thousand sects, which there now are, but a thousand times a thousand, and every year more and more.

CHAPTER CII.

VISITATIONS OF PROVIDENCE.

TWO good-looking girls of the reduced Freemantle family were deaf and dumb. They appeared very much like other children, took their places in school, and by the language of fingers were taught and questioned, and answered questions. In and out of school they conversed with children of their own age. It was very stupid of me not to learn the language of fingers, for I could have ascertained the extent of their knowledge. Their mother, however, assured me that they brought home all the news of the village, and that nothing could happen in any house of the parish but they were sure to tell her all about it. This would imply a knowledge of the names, habitations, characters, and circumstances of six hundred people.

My acquaintances urged upon me that I ought to get them into the asylum in the Kent Road. The parents had heard of it, and they looked to it as the only chance the girls had of learning how to get their livelihood. I had my own doubts about it, seeing how well they accommodated themselves to village and school. My very kind London friend, Mrs. James Morley, offered to help me, which would be

taking the chief part of the trouble, and we managed to get first the elder, then the younger, into the asylum.

The elder came home for a short holiday. The village and her own parents thought she had gone back. She did not seem to know so much, or to take the same interest in things as before; and she was become rather saucy as to her food. One curious mistake I remember. 'My sister asked her a question on her slate. The girl answered it, beginning, 'Sir.' But we none of us had taken into account that there would necessarily be a little abatement of progress while a child was forgetting one system of instruction and slowly acquiring another.

We made anxious inquiries after both on their final return to Moreton Pinckney. They were said to be very fond of dress, and of bright colours. As they could do fine needlework, this settled their destination, and one or both became dressmakers. We acted for the best, and I have no doubt we did for the best, in sending them to the asylum; but there would be loss as well as gain.

Many years after I often thought of these poor children, in connection with a matter which gave me much uneasiness, and occasionally a pang. I ought to have learnt the language of fingers, and so satisfied myself that these girls really understood what they were being taught, and were wise to their salvation. It was simple sluggishness not to do so. Moreover, the girls could already do something with their slates before they went to the asylum.

At the Berkshire village where I was residing

from 1856 to 1868, about a quarter of a mile from us, there was a poor child who up to the age of five or six had been pretty, clever, sociable, and rather quick to learn. At school she had been a favourite of the mistress and of her schoolfellows. She had a fever of some kind, and only survived with the entire loss of her eyesight and hearing. Except the touch—I forget about the sense of smelling—she had then no means of communication with the outer world.

Year after year she sensibly deteriorated and became more idiotic. Sitting, almost crouching, by the fireside, and sometimes feeling for the spout of the kettle, she incessantly went over and over again the conversations of her school days, year by year less intelligible to those about her. She had been some years in this state when I first saw her, and I then could not make out a word she said. Often did I ask myself whether I could get any access to her understanding, and proceed upon the basis of her school lessons. I was too engrossed in other matters, and when I walked out it was for ease and rest.

I am sure I too readily gave it up as a hopeless case. Had I surmounted the comparatively small difficulties of my little deaf and dumb Moreton Pinckney parishioners, I should have risen to this new occasion. Humble and unseen as the work would have been, hardly to be ascertained or traced at all, even a very moderate degree of success might have opened my way to much greater works, greater, that is, in respect of numbers and scale.

The poor child lived to near twenty, still going backward and backward, and was then happily re-

leased from what threatened to be a hideous condition of helplessness. Has anybody, content with little things, tried the work I left untried, and recorded the results? The lesson might be widely applicable. It is a not uncommon result of fever, and other illnesses, so to impair the senses and mental faculties as to throw the sufferers too much on the workings of their own memory, imagination, and sensitiveness, till they become idiotic, not in the extreme sense we now attach to the word, but in the ordinary sense in which the Greeks used it, a weak habit of egotism.

As persons thus afflicted can become worse, indeed generally do, can they not be made somewhat better? But I must return to my little world in Northants, reflecting the outer world, and indeed formed from the same material, running all the changes from nobility to meanness, beauty to deformity, and strength to utter helplessness.

The chairmaker of the village was a pensioner, not so old as dilapidated, who had much more to say than I could understand about the attempted storm of Bergen op Zoom.

Another pensioner was a marine, who, upon his toe being crushed by the fall of a ship's spar, was discharged with a shilling a day. He was glad to show almost superfluous neatness in the sole charge of my small garden for five pounds a year.

Another pensioner had received a wound in the head. He went every quarter to receive his pension, and came home mad with drink, beating wife and children, and keeping his neighbours in constant fear of worse. His poor, meek, dull wife scarcely re-

covered from one quarter to another. One forenoon I was passing near the cottage, and saw that something had happened. The poor woman had fallen head foremost down the very steep stairs, or rather ladder, in her wretched cottage, and had been found still warm, but doubled up at the bottom. It had been a work of great difficulty to extricate her body, but she was now past recovery. Had it occurred while the husband was in the house, nobody in the village would have doubted that he had done it. Fortunately for him he was a mile off, at work in the field. He came home just a little concerned. The throng looked at him sadly and reproachfully, but he took no notice of them. He evidently felt that the less said the better.

Another pensioner, a Prestidge, with his wife, both young, were the handsomest couple in the village, with some very pretty children. But he had an infirmity which I have seldom found in villages. He was fearfully jealous, and would thrash his wife if she did but exchange a smile, or a look, with one of his male neighbours. I never heard that he had the least reason to suspect her, and must conclude that it was an accidental result of his military experience.

CHAPTER CIII.

OLD HINKS.

LOW down, in a damp hole, half way to the poor woman who had retreated to the most boggy ground near the village in order to be out of this wicked world, was a household I never think of without the saddest sense of helplessness. Here is my note of them: 'John and Anne Hinks. Poor ignorant creatures. They are honest, humble, and good-natured. But theirs is the dirtiest and worst managed house in the village. They often have the ague.' One glimpse of the room downstairs explained the whole. A third of the area was occupied by a very large bed, in which lay an old man, large, and, to all appearance, healthy, strong, and even handsome. But he was paralysed in his lower extremities, and therefore tied to his bed. He had a strong voice, which was heard every minute of the day, craving, complaining, scolding, and chiding the children, whenever they interrupted his frequent dozes. He was always wanting something. Else, he had nothing to say. Never did he smile, or utter a word of tenderness, or enter into any matters beyond his animal wants and the four walls wherein he lay.

But he was a valuable property, and the son had married upon him. The young couple had the spending of his money, and also an allowance for taking care of him. With him dividing the sitting-room, and with his multifarious wants and importunate demands,

order, cleanliness, or decency were out of the question. The children played outside in the mud—that is, if they played at all, for my recollection of the entire family is that they were beaten in the game. The boys might have been good-looking but for their semi-idiotic helplessness.

Some one, I forget who, unless it was I, gave the mother a small sum to supply the eldest boy with a decent pair of trousers. How it was I know not, but the boy had had to put them on without all the buttons by which the braces were to be attached. 'How's this?' I asked at the first appearance of the poor lad holding up his trousers with his hands. 'Mother will put on the buttons this afternoon.' She did not put them on for six weeks. All that time, whether in school or in the road, and I suppose at meals too, the boy had to hold up his trousers with one hand while the other hand was otherwise employed; and as this was done imperfectly, the footing of one leg of the garment was being fretted away by dragging on the ground, and the whole thrown out of form.

I thought that if they took down the Bible, and the children read aloud, the old man would be sufficiently awed to suspend his constant cravings and complaints. So I suggested this. The mother looked faint-heartedly at a shelf. On it I saw four immense Bibles, that one of my predecessors at the parsonage, Dornford, or Shaw, or Geneste, had persuaded the several members of the family to subscribe a penny a week for. They were quite new, unopened, and untouched. Lying one upon another, and with

a quantity of things over them, they had got imbedded in dust and dirt. Seeing my forlorn looks, the mother said it was impossible to read in that house, or do anything but attend to the children and the old man. Then they were sometimes ill themselves. She didn't know what to do with herself.

I don't remember that she wished God to take the old man—indeed, I really think she did not; for the very substantial reason that they would thereby lose a large part of their income. But never in my life did I see a household so spoilt in the very making. The wretched old man had reduced the family to slavery, and they were slaves without the benefit of sharing the industry, the intelligence, the energy, and perhaps the good humour and affection of an ordinary slave-owner. There is no text of Scripture which my own experience more fully confirms as that young married couples should leave fathers and mothers wherever it is at all possible to do so.

I must confess that the case of old bedridden people has ever been one of my greatest pastoral difficulties. If I am to believe good books, I must conclude there are some who are amenable to proper treatment, and some who can apply it. But most of these poor creatures I have come to regard as cautions to myself as well as to my flocks. They are so selfish, so ill-natured, and so indifferent to the welfare and even comfort of the younger people about them. The arrangement which they regard as necessary for their own comfort may be utterly incompatible with order, decency, education, proper development, and common liberty to all about them. It answers their

own purpose, and they care for nobody else. In this way there arises the worst of tyrannies, conservatism in its most crushing and brutish form, as a huge incubus pressing upon every limb, suppressing every utterance, and stifling every emotion.

On the other hand there is something unnatural, indeed horrible, to my own conscience, either to consign old people to loneliness, or to mass them. A solitary old man or woman is a sad sight; sadder still is a crowd of them. Either extreme is to be avoided. It is a case for management; and I suggest it to those who have the charge of large parishes, and at the same time the leisure, the means, and the sense, to hit on some arrangement that shall save alike the interest of the old and of the young. First and foremost comes the plan of the cottage, which is to be both a dwelling-house and a hospital for three generations.

The question as to young people is, what can we do *for* them? They are valuable property. They are the next generation. If we live long enough we shall find them our masters, perhaps not much beholden to us, perhaps not admitting it even if they are. So England is spending millions, and worrying to death an army of teachers, in the hitherto unsatisfied problem what to do *for* children. The question as to the aged—and most working people become aged very soon—is what to do *with* them. They are regarded as effete and useless, as mere lumber to be put out of the way. They are not gregarious, or sociable one with another. Nature has not so made them or disposed them. Old people are rare; rarer

still in couples; it may be said never found associated in a greater number. Their very selfishness, or habit of taking care of themselves, which is often the secret of their longevity, is itself an obstacle to companionship. In the ancient kitchen of the old Church House at Plymtree there was, and indeed is, behind modern brickwork, an immense fireplace, in which an ox could be roasted. The building has come to be used as a poor-house, and people have told me that they have seen five fires burning on that hearth, the five old female inmates not being able to make any common arrangement. It would not be possible to force such poor old creatures into kindness and common sense. Their humour must be met. He would indeed be a great benefactor to his country who could do something to reinstate old age into its pristine dignity and usefulness. I may say that no reflection has given me more pain than the remembrance of the many offices within the competence of old people left unperformed, and the many old people there are everywhere, spending weary days, and thrown back into their old ways of gossip and evil-speaking, just for want of something to do.

CHAPTER CIV.

THE ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT.

IT may have been perceived that I do not like the Public Elementary Education Act. That, however, is not a boast, but a confession, and a very humiliating confession. My dislike is instinctive, and even pettish, but not rational. I have always much objected to putting the Bible, in the lump, into the hands of children; and to their reading it, or whole books of it, right through, and with no help or guidance. I have always found schoolmasters very harsh commentators. I have always grieved and groaned under the infliction of the Church Catechism. Why then did I not hail the Education Act as a great boon, and long-desired deliverance? The answer was that by position and a lifelong habit I was on the other side. The Act was the doing of Dissenters, led by Socinians. I was in the ranks of the beaten, and I sympathised with them.

Be the clergy ever so weak, ever so wrong-headed, and ever so unfaithful to their trust, I could not bear to see the education of the poor passing out of their hands. Accordingly I spent a fortune at Plymtree in building and maintaining schools, with a result, so far as regards the amount and value of the religious teaching, wholly inadequate to the sacrifice—as I believe.

On the secular instruction itself, imparted under

difficult circumstances, I should have much to say. But as the Department itself is most sensible of its own failures, duly noted, recorded, transmitted, and reasoned upon, through the vast sensorium of a large body of inspectors, it is superfluous to notice shortcomings. I will rather say what I have to say in favour of the system.

It may not effect an immediate reformation. Revolution simmers, it does not boil over, or explode, in this country. The English language won't be changed in a day. The schoolchildren read good English, and learn a grammar more scientific than Lindley Murray's. But once out of school, they revert to provincial Saxon. France's newly annexed children on her southern shore call their city 'Menton' in school, 'Mentone' out of it. In like manner our village schoolchildren say, 'I am going,' in school, 'I be a-going' the minute they are out of it, and for the rest of their lives. They soon forget all the concords, all the declensions and conjugations, as thoroughly as if they had never heard of them.

But there are results of a well kept village school which do not so easily or so quickly pass away. The children form a little world, a society of their own, and they teach one another. In the better classes of life an orphan, especially an orphan of the sort that the world hardly counts an orphan, a child that has lost the mother, is very apt to grow up unsocial, helpless, shy, and perhaps even selfish. It can only have a crippled education. There is no such danger in a village where there exists a good school—that is, a well-attended school, even if it be

not taught or managed better than other schools. The orphan is one of the crowd: what the rest learn it learns too. There will be mixture in the results, but there will not be that sad negation of results too often seen in solitary children brought up in the splendid solitude of large houses, and in the unsocial pomp of large establishments.

The wife of a brutish husband died in childbirth, of the merest neglect, want of food, want of clothing, want of attendance, want of everything. The babe was taken to a nurse for a year. At the end of the year it was taken back to the father's cottage; and, as there was no suitable furniture, it was laid on the ground before his eyes. He would not even take it up. A neighbour looked in, expostulated, did what she could for the child, but had to leave it, crying incessantly, on a small heap of dirty things on the ground.

The nurse inquired daily, and the third or fourth day could stand it no longer. She went to the man's cottage, and found the babe crying on the floor. She took it up and carried it to her home, saying she would never part with it again. She was assisted on a very moderate scale.

Well: it was I that helped. I might have helped anyhow, but from first to last it was one strangely expressive and still remembered look that continually moved and constrained me. Some months before the birth of this child it was the village fair, a day on which some old women put up stalls before their doors, with sweeties and cakes. Passing the cottage of this still young and fine-looking woman, I saw

she had set out a tray, and was doing a little business. I thought it out of place, and I was always jealous of these sweeties. So, after a greeting, I made some rather cynical remark to the effect that the children might be the worse for them the day after. I forget her reply, but it meant that instead of talking nonsense I had better buy some and distribute them among the children. But she gave a wistful look, the full sense of which I only knew when I heard the report of the woman who attended her as she lay dying, literally for want of everything —a state of things I had been wholly unprepared for.

That helpless castaway is a fine, strong girl of fifteen, and was, for a couple of years, a paid teacher in her school, and much more a woman of the world —that is, with much more presence of mind, self-possession, and freedom of speech—than many girls born and bred in the midst of luxury and splendour and all that money can obtain for them.

The village school draws poor children from holes and corners worse than caves, and out-of-the-way places worse than deserts. Property and agriculture distribute population often too widely and dispersedly for its good. The solitary cottage, or the very small hamlet, in the heart of the down, or the depth of the wood, or the extremity of the long valley, is very apt to produce specimens of humanity hardly credible in an age and country like ours. The children, with none to interest them by word or example except the one parent who is not always away from home, grow up savages in their instincts and in their

language. When they appear in the village, they can hardly make themselves understood. I find myself using the present tense, but all this is happily less of our times than of the times gone by.

In Salisbury Plain there was a copse on a patch of clay soil, a couple of miles from Cholderton or any other village. It looked a mere spot in the dreary expanse. It was in my parish. Alongside of it, but outside my parish boundary, were two cottages not visible from our direction. I called now and then and found the people very outlandish. Their church and vicarage, those of Addison's father, were on the Avon, four or five miles off. The clergyman had to publish banns, and in due time perform a marriage. He had never seen or heard of the couple.

After the ceremony the man put the usual 7*s.* 6*d.* into the hands of the clerk, who handed 5*s.* out of it to the clergyman. The instant the newly-married couple had disappeared under the porch, the clerk turned round to the clergyman, who was still holding his fee in his hand, and exclaimed, 'Why, she's his niece.' It was the fact. The uncle and niece had lived all their life in that solitude, and this was the result.

The poor clergyman was aghast. What was he to do? I am sure I could not say what was the best to be done, or what could be done, indeed. As the law then stood they were legally married, till the marriage could be set aside by an ecclesiastical suit. Practically the deed was done, and was irrevocable. It would have been useless, and indeed not quite

true, to tell them they were not husband and wife; and this would have been implied by returning them the fee. So the clergyman simply observed, 'You should have told me that before. What's the use of telling me now?' and pocketing the fee he walked home.

But the ignorance of farmers is even sadder, and more positively obstructive of free social intercourse, than the ignorance of their labourers. A clergyman is expected to hold conversations with farmers on terms of equality, and he finds a world of things that are in a manner light to him, and a cloud of darkness to them. He gradually acquires the tact to take for granted they know nothing, till they have proved the contrary in some small degree. It is not easy to maintain undiminished respect for people who certainly have the means and opportunities, but who choose to know nothing except farming, horseflesh, and game.

I remember a churchwarden of great reputed wealth, who kept a good table, and several hunters, and who went to the meets in pink, and thought himself quite as good as anybody. A rural dean visited the church, and enumerated what he hoped he would see at his next visit. Among these was an inventory of church property and the Book of Homilies. He came as he promised the next year. The churchwarden had not consulted me about the Book of Homilies, and I had misgivings. I was surprised when he addressed the rural dean with the look and manner of a very good boy, and said, 'I've got a Book of Homilies,' taking out of his pocket a

sixpenny account-book. I have sometimes asked myself what might happen if the rural dean directed the churchwardens to provide a terrier, as I believe they once had to do.

One of the worst results of this ignorance is that it creates a want of sympathy between the classes, and a gulf which they do not even wish to see bridged over. From the day a boy enters a public school, to the wine or supper party he gives to his friends on passing his final examination at the university, he hears the blunders and stupidities of the poor country folk treated as good jokes, and as demonstrating the vast superiority of the clergy and gentry. It never occurs to ask whether it ought to be so, and whose fault it is. There can be no doubt that this ignorance is quite preventible. For half the year there is an average of two hours in which no work can be done, and in which it would be possible to pursue some plan of self or mutual instruction. Of course such a work requires management, and would encounter foreseen or unforeseen difficulties; but that is no more than must be said of all good works, and indeed of works of the simplest necessity.

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CHAPTER CV.

SOME CLERICAL NEIGHBOURS.

WILLIAM HARDING, one of the *Præpositi* I was successively under at Charterhouse, and my contemporary at Oxford, had the living of Sulgrave, the home of the Washington family, and had just married. He was a good man, but singularly grave and quiet. The lady was a Miss Williams, a collateral descendant of Oliver Cromwell, so I was told. She was very lively, pleasant, and amusing, the last especially so, by the force of contrast. She sympathised with the Oxford Movement, but got a good deal of chaff out of it. The author of the 'Christian Year' she loved and reverenced. It must have been she that put up Harding to ask me to say what I had to say in his church. I went over with a dozen subjects in my head, indeed I should think all the 'Tracts for the Times' up to the date, and preached 'without a book,' I should be ashamed to say how long. My kind friends declared themselves gratified; but not long after Mrs. Harding spoke of an old body in the village, who inquired after the gentleman 'who had come to put them all to rights.' The old woman had just hit it, as old women are apt to do.

What I am about to relate must have been in my last year, when I was dividing my time between Moreton Pinckney and Oriel, holding college rooms. I lent them to Keble for a week or so. Shortly after I found on a shelf of my book-case, in Keble's very

neat handwriting, a complete list of subjects and texts for sermons for every Sunday and holy-day in the year. It might be only a draft. I took it down to Moreton Pinckney to study it. Calling at Sulgrave, and having to answer inquiries about my Oxford friends, I mentioned my find. The poor lady, who was in that condition which is supposed to impart a morbid strength to ordinary longings, immediately expressed the greatest desire to possess such a memento of Keble, and I instantly promised it, thus putting restitution out of my power. But I must say that when, many years afterwards, Keble's nephew wrote to ask for information or documents, the memory of this incident rose before me in rather gaunt proportions.

It could only be a month or two after this I dined at Sulgrave. The father-in-law was there, a very pleasant elderly man, with a literary look. In the course of the evening a book or something was mentioned which I might like to see. It was somewhere on the bedroom floor. Mrs. Harding rose from her seat and ran upstairs. The father-in-law looked at Harding, and said faintly, 'William.' The husband looked to the door, evidently distressed ; but it was too late, for by that time the lady must have been nearly at the top step. She reappeared soon with the book. In twenty minutes or so she seemed tired, and was persuaded to go to bed. I said good-night to her at the foot of the stairs, and saw her go up, never to come down again. She was confined in the course of the night, or day after ; the child died, and after a few weeks the mother followed. I never in my life

saw any one so cast down as the husband. It seemed a paralysis of the whole strength of the man. Happily for him he married again, and his son is in his place.

My nearest clerical neighbour was a brother of Archdeacon Clerke, holding the Chancellor's living of Eydon, a good and kind man, who must have smiled at some of my affected roughnesses. In a mansion in the same village lived a clergyman with ample means, one of the Annesley family. He died. A few days afterwards a post-chaise drove up to the rectory door, when an elderly clergyman walked into the house, and asked some free questions. 'Do you wish to see Mr. Clerke, sir?' the servant asked. 'Who's Mr. Clerke?' the stranger asked eagerly. 'The clergyman, sir.' 'The clergyman! I thought he was dead.' 'It's Mr. Annesley, sir, at the house, that is dead.' The stranger was aghast.

The rector soon presented himself. In answer to his inquiries, the stranger said that this was the second trick of the kind Lord Brougham had played on him. He took the letter out of his pocket. It ran thus, 'Dear Mr. ——, I was very sorry for the disappointment you had on the former occasion. But there can be no mistake now. Here is a very nice living in a good neighbourhood just vacant, as I see by the papers. I hasten to give you the offer of it.' The poor gentleman vowed that he would never pay the least attention to a letter from Lord Brougham again. He had come up from Durham, travelling all night, and leaving his wife at Banbury too ill to come further. 'How disappointed she will be!' he added. 'Won't you rest a little, and see the

house and garden?' Mr. Clerke asked. The stranger replied that he had better be back as soon as possible, jumped into the chaise, and disappeared.

Francis Litchfield, of Farthinghoe, was the most prominent, most amusing, and, in some ways, the most useful man in my neighbourhood. He was also the most ubiquitous, for he was to be met everywhere —except at home. I have mentioned ('Reminiscences,' vol. i. p. 5 ; ii. p. 53) his continual warfare with Arnold. Some one chanced to mention, in his hearing and mine, that Arnold had mounted a flag to indicate whether he was at home, when Litchfield exclaimed that he would set up a flag. Thereupon another of the company observed that it would be rather misleading, for it would have to be run up when Litchfield galloped in for his Sunday morning's service, and struck when he mounted his horse after the evening service, between which times he would be chiefly in church, not in his parsonage.

Litchfield's lines were various, and hardly concurrent. He was a furious Conservative, supplying weekly inspiration to a Northampton paper always in a deadly struggle with its Radical contemporary. But he was equally energetic in his reform of the old Poor Law administration, especially in the matter of head-money and payment of labour out of the rates. The result was he had many enemies among labourers wishing to get regular pay for little work, and among small farmers throwing everything on the rates.

He was a very big fellow, and he liked a good pace; indeed, he required it for his many engagements. So he wanted a good horse, and he had one.

He was always looked for at Northampton Races, and on one occasion his friends were astonished to see that his horse had lost every hair of its tail. Some of his own village labourers had got into his stable over-night and done this. Litchfield himself enjoyed the joke, and the perpetrators of the deed could not help admiring his pluck and good-humour.

He must have paid some visits to his parish, and made good use of them, for it was the best-ordered village in the neighbourhood, the single exception to the universal neatness being the parsonage. I remember having to wade through dead leaves ankle-deep to get to his front door. But a single week's frost, wind, and rain would make that litter. Long after my time Litchfield came to grief with his Conservative friends, for reasons not uncommon. As far as he was concerned it was always a losing game. They seemed to think the game ought to be its own reward. Meeting him at Oxford, I made an allusion to his old quarrel with Arnold, when he replied in gentle terms that it was all a bygone affair, and that he now wished to think the best of it.

There were several relatives of Gilbert White long settled in the neighbourhood. Sampson White, still a young man, holding a small living with a glebe, had tried farming, with the usual results. It had been a very hard time for farmers, with bad seasons, cattle disease, losses, and low prices. But his mistake, so I was told, was one that I should have thought a White would be too wise to make. He had spent too much money on buildings, fences, and gates. He had bright, dark eyes, and all the look of a quick and

penetrating observer. I was told that after a walk of a few miles, even if he had not given special attention, and had had no thought of being questioned, he could enumerate and describe every bird, every creature, every remarkable object that had come across him.

Five or six miles off was the living of Byfield, I think the name, under sequestration. The curate, a worthy man, who had been in the Navy, had done very good-natured things to screen the incumbent's delinquencies, and was now in sole charge. I called, and knowing him to be a very poor man, with a large family, was rather surprised at the look of the servants. He was a good disciplinarian, and had been judiciously selected to take care of some young women from an institution at Oxford, managed, I think, chiefly by Archdeacon Clerke. It was said to answer, though I think the poor parish might have something to say to it. Having seen a good deal of service at sea, by night as well as by day, indeed making no difference, the good man naturally concluded that the salvation of souls was an unintermitting work, and always liable to sudden calls. So he told his people from the pulpit that he should be always ready to get up any hour of the night to attend to them. 'You know my bedroom window,' he said; 'it faces the road. Call me. If I don't answer immediately, throw a pebble at the window.' It occurs to me that I have never yet seen a 'night-bell' at a parsonage door. The Oratorians have one, but then they have relays, and it is always supposed that there is one of the fathers ready to start at once

on an errand of mercy. In this case I did not hear that the old sailor's invitation ever entailed the loss of a night's rest. For myself, I should say that though I have, on rare occasions, had to pay a late visit, prolonged to near midnight, from that hour to morn the sick and the dying are generally in a state to make all talking or reading a ceremonial rather than a reasonable performance.

Sir C. Knightley had seen something of him, and had taken a fancy to him. 'I'll tell my gamekeeper to keep you supplied with rabbits,' he said once, at parting. He was as good as his word: the rabbits came regularly and continually. The curate and his family lived on them. Before that, he told me, he had been liable to apoplectic symptoms, and had sometimes been afraid of animal food. He had been quite well on rabbits. One day, however, on the butcher calling for orders, and receiving the usual reply that nothing was wanted, he was overheard delivering an anathema on the rabbits.

One of my neighbours, whom I often met, though he was six or seven miles off, chanced to make a statement which I could not but notice and remember, and which I introduced, without the mention of names, into an article in the 'British Critic' some years after. He had accepted his living, which was in some respects a very eligible one, subject to a composition of recent date, and on the understanding that such was the true value, and that he was to be content with it. The composition was very short of the true value, so I was given to understand, but the clergyman felt himself bound in honour not to insist

on his due. I can have no doubt that such was the general purport of the statement; though I have to remember that every clergyman is sure to be told by somebody or other that he ought to receive more than he does, and many a clergyman has got into difficulties by paying attention to hints of this sort. A well-known Commissioner of Tithes wrote to me for names and such particulars as I could give. I gave them in confidence, and heard no more of the matter.

Another neighbour I only heard of on the sale of his effects after his death. He had lived in a small parsonage, serving a small church, many years. From the parsonage to the church it was a lonely walk of a mile. The poor man, having nothing else to do, and nothing to occupy his thoughts, could not resist the temptation to pick up every stick he found in his path. These he brought home, distributed in sizes, and faggoted. At his death there were sold near two thousand faggots, in sizes, filling a room in the house.

The practice was scarcely more ridiculous than the husbanding of bits of unused paper, or of twine, or of buttons. Such tricks are very often a relic of childhood fostered by isolation. Many a sensible man, capable of taking a fair measure of important things, will spend a morning in arranging rubbish that the greediest 'gather-'em-up' would not give a shilling for.

But the tyranny of small habits is painful and degrading. I remember Mr. Joyce, of Hitcham, giving me some instances. A poor gentleman was never known to walk over Maidenhead Bridge without taking care to plant his foot, each step, on a joining

of the stones, though this involved sometimes a step of four feet, sometimes of less than half that. Another gentleman could never close a door without returning to the door-handle to be sure the door was closed. A humorous friend once interposed between him and the door, but was implored to let the whim have its way. Another poor gentleman was worse used, with sadder consequences. He had before his house, on the opposite side of the way, a long shed, with a metal shoot to catch the droppings from the slates. It happened to be just within one's reach. Every night the poor man walked solemnly across the road, and passed his fingers along the whole length of the shoot, to be sure there was no obstruction in it. An unkind neighbour took care one evening that his fears should be justified, and he felt the trick so keenly as to give up his house and leave the neighbourhood.

CHAPTER CVI.

A PUPIL.

IN the Long Vacation of 1835 I had a pupil who became an object of much interest to me then and for many years after. This was Charles Goring, of Wiston Park, near Shoreham, Sussex. His father had been left with three daughters, one of whom married Trower, a Fellow of Oriel, who became a Scotch bishop, and afterwards Bishop of Gibraltar.

and who, when I went to Devonshire, was taking Henry of Exeter's Visitations and Confirmations. The father had married again, and had left two sons, Charles and John. The former, now seventeen, but somewhat in advance of his years, had left Winchester, and was to go to Christchurch, I think, the next term. What was he to do in the interval?

Trower recommended me to Mrs. Goring, who first met me, by appointment, at Mr. Ballard's, of Croperdy, and then drove over to Moreton Pinckney, to view the parsonage and its occupants. Frankly and confidentially she told me her plans for her son. I am aware of treading on tender ground, but I trust I may say nothing that can offend.

Charles Goring had very naturally wished to spend this Long Vacation at home, where in fact he was master. He delighted in his old Elizabethan mansion, his country pursuits, and his neighbours. What more natural and proper, it might seem, than that he should step into the post Providence had designed for him, by degrees as it were, and on probation, under tutelage? Not to have such a home, still more to have no home at all, might be deemed a loss, yet not so great a loss as to have such a home and not be permitted to enjoy it.

But a very little experience and a very little thought leave no doubt that this home was about the most dangerous place for the youth to spend a Long Vacation at. He was very good-looking, very lively, and very agreeable. He could not but be an object of admiration to all the young ladies within sound or sight of him, and that admiration could not

but proceed further under favourable circumstances. One young lady I did hear of, pretty, clever, and, perhaps, not more ambitious than such young ladies are apt to be, but already holding a place in Charles Goring's tender regards. But not to speak of the inexpediency of an engagement at seventeen—an age sweet for a woman, but very raw for men—it was said that she was not quite such a match as the youth's friends had a right to expect for him as the owner of a good part of a favourite county. Anyhow, the mother did not see it in the same light as the son appeared to do. It was a superficial impression, she thought, which time and absence might soon leave no traces of; and it certainly was her duty to see that her son did not make a hasty choice. Moreton Pinckney, the very heart of a *terra incognita*, seemed just the place for him.

Mrs. Goring had a definite plan for her son. It struck me at the time as rather too sensible a plan, and as leaving the chapter of accidents too much out of account. She did not care about her son being a scholar. She did not like bookworms: they were good for nothing. Charles was quite scholar enough. 'Just read something with him to keep up what he knows, and to pass the time.' She wished her son to go into Parliament for a few years, not longer. She hated politics; they divided people so much, and spoilt conversation. But the House of Commons was an introduction to society. A gentleman could pick his friends there, though he would have to do it. She thought that thirty or thirty-five was quite early enough for a country gentleman to marry. He could then

make a sensible choice, somebody who would be worthy of him, and really useful to him.

Charles Goring came, bringing his horse and miniature groom, and was a very agreeable addition to our family party. We went through the 'Odyssey' together at the rate of several hundred lines a day, in cross-country fashion, raising few questions, and recognising no difficulties. Making frequent visits to his relative Mr. Ballard at Croperdy, he did not find Moreton Pinckney dull.

I never saw an animal so completely under command, and at one with its rider, as the 'Oxford screw' he brought with him. He said he could take it over a thatched cottage, or along the top of a rough stone wall. He was wise enough not to make the trial; but any time, at a moment's notice, he would land his horse over wall and ditch in the field beyond.

His groom was a neat and well-behaved little lad from Lord Egremont's stables. He had one day taken the horse, as arranged, to the chief inn at Banbury, to meet his master. On Goring going into the yard the men told him they had just missed from a window-sill a dirty and used-up old currycomb, not worth fourpence, and had found it in the boy's pocket. It was a most unaccountable theft, for the boy had only to ask for anything he might want, and he would have it. Goring was fond of him; but he now took him into the middle of the yard, took off his jacket, and, in the presence of all the men, gave him a very severe flogging with his whip. I will hope it stopped a bad beginning.

We had no carriage; so when we and my pupil

were invited out, we borrowed all sorts of vehicles, which Goring was delighted to drive in the style of an Irish carman. I am sorry to say he spoilt the temper of my poor old cat, which somehow associated me with its wrongs, thinking I ought at least to have protected it. Cats, I must confess, don't understand nonsense as well as dogs do.

Goring went through the usual career of a Christchurch gentleman commoner. For many years he was in Parliament for Shoreham, seldom speaking except upon some magistrate's question, or for Protestantism. I was a little surprised at this outburst of zeal, but it was plain that his friends and neighbours had him well in hand. Goring had with him at Moreton Pinckney some plans for the rebuilding of his house, which was an ancient pile, remarkable for a large entrance-hall, like the dining-hall of a college. I had not yet been bitten with the architectural mania, and I did not envy the task left to my pupil, as it appeared, by his father. His architect strongly recommended a new and more open site, for the house stood at the north-eastern foot of a high and gloomy hill. He undertook to transplant the loved 'hall,' stone by stone, so that no change could be discovered in it; but sentiment prevailed over common sense.

Knowing well my pupil's temperament, I was anxious to hear of his being married. His mother did not live to see the event she had timed so carefully. I think it was not till Goring was near twice the age at which I knew him that he married the youthful daughter of Sir Willoughby W. Dixie. His

friends, I heard, were startled to see her resemblance to the object of his early attachment. A few weeks after the marriage he died of a fever. His brother John, of whom I had heard that he had wished to take orders, but had been advised not to do so while Charles remained unmarried, had in fact taken deacon's orders a year or two before the marriage and death. He has not proceeded to priest's orders, and he is now, after a long difficulty on the point, an exception to the rule laid down by his lord lieutenant, not to put clergymen on the bench. His name, however, is not to be found in 'Crockford.'

CHAPTER CVII.

SERMONS.

THE most incredulous reader will not doubt that Moreton Pinckney, village, people, and neighbourhood, rise often before me, and are as present as things can be far gone and far away. If being in the mind's eye implies the spiritual presence of the distant 'seer' at the spot his memory recalls, then my spirit must haunt that village much more constantly and ubiquitously than 'Parson Buller' ever did. I have related what I saw, heard, said, or did; all positive experiences. It is a record of, perhaps, imaginary successes, and real disappointments. I spent good years, strength, trouble, and money enough to get into difficulties. I denied myself, and, what was worse,

those about me, the advantages of society, for I could almost count my evenings not at home the whole three years.

I had a long ailment, for which I would not be treated or advised. I now feel sure it was ague, one of the pests of the neighbourhood. I could not be warm, except by violent exercise, or in flushes now and then. My head was hot; extremities very cold; I could not sleep. I could not study or write except on compulsion. Perhaps I was doing or trying too much; perhaps my diet was not generous enough; perhaps I wanted change; perhaps I took my charge too laboriously, always on my legs. Whenever I was afoot I was flying the past, pursuing the future, and running away from myself. Time and space went quickly together. Any time I could have compounded for the fate of the poor man in the German story who turned the wrong screw in his magic boots, and has been walking about night and day ever since.

I was at Oxford one Saturday, and Golightly had kindly promised me a lift of seven or eight miles on the road to my church, which would enable me to do the remainder by midnight. But I was busy about something—perhaps about that translation, or those translations, I had promised for the 'Library of the Fathers.' The sun was setting when I presented myself at Golightly's. The servant said the pony could not stand the gaslights, and that we should probably be upset before we got clear of Oxford. 'Then I must lose no time, and start at once.'

I said and did. Ten miles on my road, I passed through a village as the shops were closing, bought a

penny loaf, which I ate. It was the only loaf remaining in the shop, and had been unsold in consequence of the under crust having been reduced to cinder in the baking. Seven miles further on I lay for an hour on a heap of stones broken for the road, and actually dozed. As the sun was rising I entered my village, woke up my household, and crept into bed, to be waked by the church bell ringing almost overhead for the morning service. This is the sort of thing I was frequently doing, and it was of a piece with my pecuniary improvidence and general waste of power.

For one pedestrian achievement I must hold a religious society—I forget which—responsible. There came from London a circular for some special object, representing that Church collections were apt to be scanty, and that they left out many that ought to contribute, and might perhaps, if appealed to. So it urged a house-to-house visitation for the purpose. This means from man to man, and that means from field to field. I started early one day, and, visiting most of the farmhouses in the parish, walked twenty miles, returned with sixpence, which a farmer, in pure compassion, stopped his plough to extract from his pocket.

The retrospect continually forced upon me reveals more and more what I failed to do, what I failed even to try to do as I ought to have tried. I confine myself to two offices of the Christian ministry, which every clergyman ought to be able to look back on after many years with a good conscience. I cannot do that with regard either to my pulpit ministration, or to my house-to-house visitation.

As to the first of these I was idle, slovenly, without plan, and ready to avail myself of any shift that offered. I wrote some sermons; I preached more without book and without preparation. I copied; I tried Beveridge's 'Notes'; I borrowed. Golightly kindly lent me sermons, which I read in the pulpit sometimes with the sensation of doing penance. At my earnest entreaty Heurtley, who had then a parish not far off, lent me many sermons. What a hypocrite did I feel myself as I preached them! My sensations were those of a common swindler assuming the name and character of some respectable personage.

Young clergymen are frequently recommended to preach sermons not their own; but there ought still to be some correspondence between the speaker and that which is spoken. There is a natural harmony between a man and his various utterances. He says and does what it is natural for him to say or do. This harmony is more striking if there be what is called character or a strong individuality. The accustomed hearer expects and almost knows what the preacher is about to say, and is disconcerted if he does not fulfil this expectation. When the preacher speaks in language not his own, it is felt that the man is one thing, the words another.

As a general rule, when it is clearly too much to expect a clergyman to deliver two well-composed discourses of his own composition every Sunday, and when the requirement would interfere with other openly important duties, and health itself, I would rather recommend, as a more honest and useful course, great brevity and simplicity. Speaking for myself I

have been quite as much edified and affected by sermons that a child might have written, not more than ten minutes long, than by long discourses of some eloquence and much learning.

To show what I mean I beg leave to interpolate a very recent experience. Two years ago I was at Llandudno. It is the custom there to have an evening service, if the weather is favourable, at the parish church, which is an ancient and very small votive chapel on high ground, near the extremity of the Great Orme's Head. One afternoon I found myself one of a congregation of five hundred, and service was in the churchyard. On the next occasion it was gusty, rainy, and cold ; and as I went on with a companion, a serious and intelligent youth of twenty-seven, we met numerous parties who had evidently given up the attempt to reach the church. When we arrived, we found not quite a dozen people looking at the monuments, and the bell ringing for service. It seemed to be a doubtful affair. I and my companion walked in, one or two followed, then a few more. Service began, and before prayers were over there might be forty.

The minister looked fresh from a theological college, or a training college. By that time it would have been too dark for manuscript, but he had nothing. He made, with earnestness, and repeated with very little variety, some simple observations on a short passage from the gospel narrative, without even the attempt at readiness or fluency. He had little advantage of appearance, and not much of voice. When we were out in the churchyard, my companion said he had

never heard a sermon he felt more, and that he wished all sermons were like this. Substantially I agreed with him, though there would have been a startling inconsistency in such a sermon preached to a thousand well-dressed people in a church as big and as fine as a cathedral. There was more truth than Dr. Johnson was aware of in his own parody. 'Who drives fat horses must himself be fat.'

Nowhere is a moving and stirring style of eloquence more needed than in a village church. So much has it to contend with. A large part of the agricultural routine is the same on Sunday as on week day. Not a few of my people at Moreton Pinckney, as I found at Plymtree also, had to walk a couple of miles to milk their cows before sunset. Every farmer, or farmer's wife, had a numerous family of brute aids and dependents, never so likely to go wrong as on Sunday. It is the day when tramps, thieves, and mischievous boys have the country to themselves, and when even the vermin seem to be bolder.

The farmer cannot help feeling all this. No sooner is he seated in church than there obtrudes upon him the defenceless condition of his yard and his stock; the idleness of the boys, the wandering propensities of this animal and the vicious nature of that. Such thoughts may be dispelled one minute, but it is to return the next; and, not to speak of the prayers, the sermon had need be very impressive, or very interesting, to exclude those sublunary cares which are, indeed, the life of the agriculturist, and his duty too.

In these days it is often said, with good reason, 'Don't offer us advice; we are overdone with it.

Don't give us opinions; the world is full of them. Tell us what you are doing, or have done.' In the face of this deprecation I do venture to suggest what I cannot say I ever seriously tried, but what stands upon very solid grounds. A sermon, even if it be in the main hortatory, ought to be instructive. It is part of a process of education. It is becoming more and more the only religious education many of our young people are likely to have. As it stands, it may be classed with the weakest and most illusory of all modes of education.

What is that weak and illusory mode, justly condemned by all who have given a thought to the matter? It is a course of lectures delivered by a professor, without any preparation on the part of the pupils, or any security that they attend, understand and store in their memories. No art or science could possibly be taught in this way. An itinerant lecturer expects to amuse, to raise curiosity, and to excite an interest that in some minds may lead to study. But he is fully aware that, even with the aid of striking illustrations, he is not making his hearers chemists, or mechanicians, or architects, or astronomers.

What I venture to suggest is that at least one of the weekly sermons be regarded as a stage of academic instruction. In many congregations there are at least a dozen who may be treated as catechumens, and who are ready to be so treated. Whether they should be prepared for the sermon will depend on the subject, and other circumstances. But, at all events, let them be examined in the various matters of the sermon a day or two after. This will quicken their

attention. It will also lead the preacher to introduce texts, facts, names, and illustrations that can be remembered and examined upon. It will save him from that wearisome reiteration that extempore preachers are apt to fall into from mere failure of energy. It will tend to point, and perhaps even to brevity.

I suppose I may speak for preachers generally when I say that they have to encounter, even in their own minds, a mass of obstruction, a wilderness of trivialities, and a current of inimical influences, in any preparation for the pulpit, not to say in the pulpit. Speaking only for myself, I am sure I could have made better head against them, and that I should have been in all respects fitter for the pulpit, had I attended better, and with more of heart and mind, to my pastoral duties. I attended to them, but not so much, or in the way, that I should have done.

I wish to speak seriously on this point, and to begin at once by disclaiming any authority as an example. If I confess to failure, let it be a warning. I treated my parishioners as pleasant neighbours, exchanging civilities and kindnesses. I was interested in their affairs—that is, the affairs of this world; I often tried to extend a little the range of our conversation. But perhaps my spiritual critics would be not far wrong in concluding that I generally started without the one thing most needed for the occasion. I could not expect to make others better than myself. I had not the basis, the centre, or the direction, which the attempt required.

The omission or the imperfect discharge of pastoral duty must tell upon all other ministerial work. What a preacher says in the pulpit ought to be that which he is wont to say at the bedside, in the parlour, in the cottage kitchen, in the field-path, or on the highway. It ought to have the stamp of custom and common life ; and to be addressed not only to a crowd, but to each member of that crowd, as it were one soul in communion with another. The greatest homage ever given to personal goodness in rural districts is that such a one is always the same ; that is, on all occasions it is the same man, the same heart, soul, and mind before you. The preacher, the talker, and the doer must be found identical. The identity is felt even by those who may not have the opportunity of knowing the preacher out of the pulpit.

I will take what I believe is a well known illustration. One who was for many years in the way of hearing Lord Palmerston talk over political emergencies, said that he never heard or read one of his speeches in Parliament without recognising every word, for his lordship only said in the House what he had been saying over and over again to all the people about him. It was this that gave irresistible power to an eloquence which was by no means of the highest order, and which was frequently challenged on the score of sentiment, and even principle.

It cannot be seriously denied that pastoral duties are an essential and most important part of the ministerial commission, and therefore of the compact made between the Church and the State—that is,

between the ministers of the Church and the people. Every farthing of tithe, fee, or other income, paid to the clergy, constitutes a claim to personal attendance on the affairs of the soul, as much as the stipend of a parish doctor or of a clerk of the peace commits them to their respective duties. In fact a clergyman that neglects pastoral duties, and a Church that allows the neglect, must be continually undermining itself, and inevitably, though gradually, disestablishing itself.

There is no equivalent, or even passable substitute, for direct and immediate intercourse of the minister and all the members of his flock. Societies, district visitors, tracts, libraries, and church services offered to people who cannot or will not come, never will supply the place of the shepherd seeking out his flock, and the man of God comforting the afflicted soul, or confronting the transgressor. By face to face work churches are founded, cemented, enlarged, and perpetuated. By the want of it they decay, split to fragments, diminish, and fall. All power, all dignity, all the privileges a State can confer, are sure to pass out of the hands of a clergy that can no longer call itself the poor man's nearest neighbour and best friend.

CHAPTER CVIII.

SALISBURY PLAIN.

I MUST confess never to have acquired much love for Salisbury Plain. This was partly because none of my former experiences had prepared me for it, and partly my own fault. The people there loved the Plain and rejoiced in it, just as an Arab does in the desert, and a true sailor in the ocean. The sparseness of the population makes life precious, and a clergyman counts for something, a man and a brother too, when he is the only educated being for several miles round. Valleys are valleys, rivers are rivers, meadows are meadows, trees are trees, and even mud hovels good human habitations, when you suddenly and unexpectedly come upon them, after seeing nothing but plain, plain, plain, for a good hour or two. Before I ever saw the region I was under the common English misapprehension that the Plain was a dead level. On the contrary it is the most lumpy ground in England. The real meaning of the word is best understood by its application to the human physiognomy. A plain face is one without expression, without life, without anything to excite interest. There are abnormal and even ugly faces that are not plain, because they win sympathy, or at least curiosity.

Salisbury Plain I used to compare to the Atlantic Ocean suddenly fixed in mid storm, only that there were no crests of foam. Beacon Hill, in my own

parish, is nearly as high as the Cotswolds, which, like the Plain, are dull enough when you get quite in them. Keble used to talk of them respectfully, for much of his early life was spent on the south-eastern side of them. But what he and his pupils used to talk gushingly about were the winding streams, the devious paths, the green 'inches and holms,' the rough coppices, and a sort of hidden world.

The Plain has its share of these compensations. Addison, born and bred in the midst, knew and felt them. No one could have written his translation of the 23rd Psalm, unless he had passed many a hot, sultry day in the midst of thirsty downs, dusty lanes, and water meadows. About twelve o'clock clouds of dust, the tinkling of bells, and barking of dogs, and the hoarse voices of the poor shepherds, announced columns of sheep rushing down for three or four hours' pasture on the fresh luscious grass, after which they were driven back to pure air and dry quarters. There has been a great alteration since my time there, 'roots' now supplying the place of the water meadow. The old order was then already passing away, and the new order setting in. But, as I remember, there were localities and formations defying modern treatment.

Beacon Hill, like most hills in the south of England, presented a very gradual slope to the east, and a very precipitous front to the west. You could drive up one side, and roll down the other. The precipice overhung a dark dismal valley, which our remote ancestors or predecessors made a national burial-ground. It contains some scores of king barrows,

priest barrows, and other barrows, from huge rings to gentle heavings. I traversed it at all hours, and, never seeing a soul far or near, felt its weirdness. I am sure this was the Valley of the Shadow of Death in Addison's mind. A little way from the precipice and the barrows there is a large piece of broken ground, showing the vestiges of a more luxuriant vegetation than is found in the neighbourhood. Once in three or four years it breaks out into springs, which flow long enough to create an oasis. This must be the 'barren wilderness' which the poet tells us is sometimes made to smile, and in which he sees the marks of a gracious and wonder-working God.

At times the hill-side and valley below were lively enough. There were annual coursing matches, to which the neighbourhood all came, when 'Father ——,' I forget his name, from Dublin, used to win prizes. Then the Tidworth hounds would sometimes give a momentary flash of life to the dead ground. Anything whatever that brought a higher or even a gayer life near, comforted and cheered me. I was glad to feel that three miles off there was a great establishment, three packs of hounds, seventy horses, a steam-engine, an immense conservatory meant as a substitute for Madeira or the south of France, and a vigorous fight between bags of money on the one side, and austere and sterile nature on the other.

I don't know why the hounds never came my way, and I took it ill of them—that is, of the fox properly, but I took it all as one concern. I had the gratification of knowing that the oval bit of chalk gravel before my front had been carefully shaped and

sized to admit of Mrs. Assheton Smith's carriage-and-four turning in it, and that the feat had often been successfully performed in Walter Blunt's time.

Fox-hunting was carried on under difficulties, from the complete want of natural cover. For the matter of that, no blade of grass, or flower of any kind, in the virgin soil rose more than an inch from the ground, and it was hardly possible for even a beetle to hide himself so as not to be seen fifty yards off. With some searching one might discover a gentianella a finger-nail high, or a yellow cistus as big as a threepenny-bit. So a breed of small foxes had to be imported from Wales, and, while young, kept in a deep pit dug for the purpose at the top of Sidbury Hill. They had, however, to be turned out, and, among other substitutes for proper cover, two acres were covered with bavins piled several feet high, and fostering a vegetation of their own. The foxes made ways in this labyrinth.

'But surely,' some of my readers will say, 'man is not so dependent on the precarious boons of Nature, as to be unhappy if she chooses to frown or to be dull; and he cannot be so hard driven as to depend on foxes and fox-hunters.' I must add to my pleas. If I ascended Beacon Hill, I did just catch the top of Salisbury spire; but, like Aaron's rod, it has swallowed all the other spires on the Plain. I could not see a single church from that hill except my own. I was told that I could see a hill in Dorsetshire, and even the Isle of Wight, but I never saw either to be sure of it. I could not quite say, like Alexander Selkirk that my own parish never heard the sound of a

church-going bell, for it had one bell; but I never heard the sound of another except by going a long way for it, and I cannot remember to have heard a peal of bells in Wiltshire.

If I say that in the whole of my parish there was not a drop of either running or standing water, and that a cup of water thrown out would everywhere disappear in the soil, I have to make a curious exception. There was clay on the tops of the hills; and where the clay had been dug out, or there was a natural hollow, there might be a small pond. The hills were like that rude piece of cookery called a black-cap pudding. I used to go to the tops and find myself in another world, but a very small one. It was the dab of stubborn clay that had made the hill, by saving it from diluvial effacement. But it was a real comfort to me to know that there was clay even nearer than the hills, and that it could be reached by boring, say, only a quarter of a mile. It even afforded me a momentary gratification to be told that the water was rising in the wells. It was life, and the life was getting nearer to me.

Some of my readers, if they chance to be of Wales, or Devonshire, or Derbyshire, where almost every field has its rivulet, will ask how water was got for the cattle. At Cholderton, and in the whole parish, every drop they had was drawn up from the wells. Day after day I have seen two men drawing water from a well for large successive flocks of sheep. The well was surrounded by a palisade of hurdles, each with a square aperture. Eight or nine very long wooden troughs radiated from the well, with one end

inserted in one of these apertures. The men inside emptied their buckets into the inner end of the troughs, along which the sheep packed themselves as close as they could stand. As one watched the water one could see it rapidly dwindling as a score sheep held their muzzles in it.

But there was another provision for the sheep which I never saw in actual use, and was always disposed to think a piece of fancy. There were artificial ponds on the high ground a couple of miles from the village. They were carefully lined with a mixture of chalk, lime, and clay, in order to hold water; the edges being paved with flint to prevent the sharp hoofs of the sheep from piercing this lining. The surrounding surface, the natural channels, and the roads, if any, were shaped to conduct the rainfall into the pond. But there was also a prevailing idea that these ponds were fed by the mists frequently seen to hang on the hill-tops. My own experience is that I never once saw an animal drinking at these ponds; that there was always water in them, though it sometimes fell low, and that it always looked brownish, as if it had been there very long. Such a pond might be useful on an emergency, but it would only be a few days' supply for a flock of five hundred sheep, and my two farmers had sixteen hundred between them. One of these ponds would cost a hundred pounds making, and there was a regular craft that made it their chief employment. They who make can unmake, and it was said these fellows kept a corrosive liquid with which they could destroy the work of a successful rival. The liquid

made its way through the lining, and the water followed.

The water in these basins showed no signs of organic matter, which would itself indicate how little they had been used. On the hill-tops they had no life near them but the natural life of the Plain. But I remember an exception easily accounted for. In my walk across the Plain in 1830 or 1831, seeing Sidbury Hill near Tidworth House, I made for the top of it, and found a cottage, some small enclosures, poultry, and a pond that must have had some lining, or it could not have held a drop of water. It was a burning hot day. I asked for a drink of water. They had none but what was in that pond, they said, pointing to it. I had never seen water so full of life. 'Do you drink that?' I asked. They admitted it was impossible. They strained it and boiled it for tea; but they usually drank it in the form of beer—very thin, they said, such as I should not care to drink. It was thin indeed, but it quenched my thirst. I forget how poor Nep—Samuel Wilberforce's dog—fared, for he was with me, suffering very much from the heat.

The sight of the chalk, showing its greenish, pale, ghostly hues at every interruption of the thin layer of soil, used to give me the shivers. A relative who had been some years in the East observed to me that in a tropical climate Salisbury Plain would be a desert. It was too dreadful to think of.

I used to ransack my brains—for it was all brain-work in my case, nothing to call science—for ideas as to the possible conversion of this world of chalk to

some profitable form and purpose. I never had even the glimpse of such a discovery to cheer me.

One vestige of another world I frequently found, and always brought home—indeed, sometimes a pocket full of them. I know no more what they are now than I knew then. These were small metallic lumps, sometimes a pound weight or more. Some looked as if they had fallen in a liquid state and had received impressions from the flint. Most were irregular balls. They were easily broken—indeed, they often broke to pieces of themselves when left in a damp corner. They then disclosed a great number of bright needles converging in a central cavity more or less filled with metallic dust. Robinson Crusoe could not have been more curious about the footsteps found in the sand than I was about these unaccountable visitors. I collected a good barrow-load of them. In a few years I was ashamed of my dingy hoard, and ended by burying them. I suppose they are often found in the chalk. The villagers call them thunderbolts.

Some years after I left Cholderton, a naval officer employed in the revenue service at Dover heard a rush through the air in a thunderstorm, and upon making a search found the metallic fragments of a thunderbolt, as he felt sure they must be. He at once drew up a memorial, and sent it, with the fragments, to the Admiralty. As they did not share his interest in the matter, and anyhow took their time about it, he wrote to the papers—indeed, to everybody he could write to; and went off his head at the general stupidity, or want of faith. I really should

be glad to know what these things are, and how they came to be where they are.

How the chalk itself ever came there, or the two or three inches of soil mercifully clothing it, were questions then out of my measure. One question I did venture to puzzle about, for it came within historic range. There are numerous inequalities of the surface there. Besides barrows of all shapes and sizes, and indications of old villages, or old tillage, the Plain is everywhere traversed by dykes that, when first made, would present a wall on one side, a ditch on the other. They might be temporary defences; they might be the boundaries of properties—small sovereignties perhaps. All these inequalities, of all probable ages, were covered with natural soil to about the same depth as the Plain. The worms, of course, had done this, for there was nobody else to do it. I repeatedly asked how long they would take to do it, and was told a hundred years. This seemed to me very little time for the work, and none of my informants could have given it as the result of his experience, or even of a family tradition. It has lately been stated, on very scientific authority, that worms can reproduce the old depth of garden or field soil—'meat earth' they call it in Devonshire—in ten or twelve years. This, to me, is a very surprising statement. But it is evident the operation is much affected by circumstances. In Salisbury Plain the worms, which run small there, have to bring up what little mould there is out of a rough mass of chalk stones a foot or two deep. They find no leaves on the surface to draw down into their holes. On the other hand, they

do receive some assistance in their work. The sheep contribute. There is also a kind of small slug that manages to live and die there. I believe it is even more important that all over the down there is a minute snail which the sheep are very fond of, and which is said to give the peculiar flavour of South Down mutton.

Even in the valleys there are few places where a tree can strike its roots a foot deep, and longitudinal bearings are not always sufficient. The eleven miles belt of firs round the Malet property came to look very thin and poor before I left Cholderton. I inquired the value of the fir poles. The reply was straight. Fourpence for each, if bought on the spot; sixpence, if the carrying were to be included. There was no need of periodical fellings, for the winds took care of that. But the elm-trees in the valleys were nearly as unstable. My chief farmer, I think in 1836, drove me to Salisbury in a hurricane. Approaching the city, I saw a long row of cottages unthatched in a quarter of a minute, and if I had not been obliged to shut my eyes, might have seen one of the pinnacles of the cathedral tower come down. On our return I counted two hundred trees lying prostrate near—indeed, some upon the road. At Cholderton I found that close to the parsonage eleven trees had come down together, the area of surface they had stood upon remaining the same, but now upright instead of horizontal, like the base of a wineglass, or a chessman, if you chance to knock it down. A Hampshire neighbour, three miles off, had had to build a parsonage, and he very naturally so placed it as to command

the vista of a fine avenue of elms. Near forty of them had succumbed, and what remained was hardly a vista at all.

There was no stone near. The stone for my church I bought ready cut, shaped, and carved, from Tisbury, on the other side of the Plain. There was no gravel near. The nearest gravel-pit was a long way on the other side of Salisbury, and a waggon-load of it cost two guineas.

The fact of the stone for my church coming regularly and expeditiously twenty-seven miles across the Plain has suggested to me that James II. must have been misled by his treacherous advisers when he proposed to encounter the Prince of Orange at Salisbury. It could not be necessary that the prince should take that route, and with one forced march from Tisbury he could easily establish himself at Amesbury, and the next day leave the king in the rear.

Chalk is said to be good building material, and I had the means of knowing this, for my parsonage was of chalk, and I added to it in chalk. But there is a common saying in the Plain that a chalk building must have a good hat and a good pair of shoes, for otherwise the rain from above or the damp from below soon brings it down. Within less than a mile of me I had ample and melancholy proof of this, for I found two large chalk ruins rapidly disappearing by course of nature. A young gentleman coming into some money had built a large house, and had planted many acres, forming a circuitous communication with the Exeter road. He came to the end of his money, and left the unfinished chalk mansion to the play of the elements.

So there it was falling to pieces, except a small part reserved for a care-taker.

In another direction a friend of the Malets had built of the same material a good house, and had laid out some acres in ornamental grounds. For consistency as for comfort he had a thatch roof. One harvest day all were away in the fields, except a maid, who upon looking out of a bedroom window saw a spark light from the kitchen chimney upon the thatch, just out of her reach. It crept along as in a tinder-box. She threw water at it without effect. Soon it flared up. She ran for help, which quickly came, but only to see the whole roof in a blaze, and the house destroyed. There for several years the walls were crumbling away under the alternate action of rain, frost, and thaw. The trees flourished, and gave the spot all the look of a home, but with soil only three inches deep, and under that a layer of chalk stones, even they may have run out their destiny by this time.

These dreary chalk ruins got a hold on my imagination. When the needlessly solid and needlessly high walls of my new church were near the elaborate cornice, I dreamt one night that I saw the whole edifice crumbling away, the ashlar work, the corners, and the carvings, lines horizontal and lines perpendicular, all losing face and form, and dwindling into a mere sandbank. The impression remained long on me as a condemnation of my work, doomed at last to crumble away.

In common with my parishioners I much prized the survival of forty acres of original down, called the

Cow Down, close to the village. It lay high, with a sharp dip to the west. Across it were tracks of man and beast. One could stroll over it, and be in the world one minute, and solitary the next. The villagers had a certain superstitious respect for the place. There was a double tumulus upon it, which I opened in the company of my friend J. B. Deane, only, however, to find that it was British, but overlaid with a Roman cremation, which had at some time been roughly investigated.

The times were becoming bad for farmers. Lady Nelson's tenant was losing money, he said; and I dare-say said honestly, though it was partly the fault of his own temper. He could not hold the farm on, he said, unless he could deal with these forty acres, which lay close, and were therefore less costly for cropping. Her ladyship, no doubt as advised, signed and sealed the warrant of death for the Cow Down, to the general sorrow. It was pared. The parings were dried in the sun. They were collected into heaps, and soon reduced to ashes. In a day or two they would have been spread over the ground and ploughed and harrowed in. A hurricane blew the greater part of them across a lane right into Hampshire. What remained was ploughed in. I suppose the next stage in the process would be a crop of turnips, to be eaten on the ground. What I remember most distinctly was the crop of wheat, much of it standing five feet high, thick and full-eared. There came heavy wind and rain, and most of the field was laid, to the great detriment of the crop. Meanwhile, the Hampshire field, on the other side of the boundary, indicated, by

long stripes of exceptional fertility, the points where the banks and fences had afforded the freest passage for the fugitive ashes of the Cow Down. The parish watched these operations of man and of nature very closely, and looked grave at the result. It did not put Lady Nelson's tenant in better humour with his farm, and he gave it up not long after. In fact he could do well without it.

I searched in vain for the ideal shepherd of Salisbury Plain, and everywhere heard the same story of the actual personage. The shepherd and his dog are much of a piece. He is silent, moody, suspicious, and morose; so habituated to solitude as to like it. What religion he has is very much one of his own. He hears the church bells, and knows there is praying and preaching and singing going on. But it is one of childhood's memories. Fowle once told us on entering a clerical meeting that he had just been at the bedside of an old shepherd who had not been inside a church for seven sabbaths of years—that is, forty-nine years—and who felt it now. I have asked shepherds whether they could not arrange with a man to take their place for a single service. 'I should have to pay a man sixpence, or a shilling, and when I came back to my sheep I should be sure to find something had gone wrong.'

Most people think, with poor Henry VI. in Shakespeare's play, that shepherding is an easy life. It is not. The eye must be always on the look-out. The difficulty is to find constant work for the hands. Even notching sticks into calendars is superseded by the cheap modern almanac; and there is no great demand

for chairs and other puzzles loaded with shot in some mysterious recess, and neither ornamental nor useful.

The shepherd must be out in all weathers, and one of them told me the bread sometimes froze in his pocket. The fold travels over the ground, and in order to fix the hurdles the shepherd has a heavy iron bar wherewith to make holes for the stakes. When the frost has penetrated far into the ground it takes a quarter of an hour to make a hole deep enough to hold a stake. The shepherd never dries his overcoat at the fire. That affects the lie of the nap, insomuch that the cloth is not so effectual to keep off the rain, and does not last so long. The lambing season lasts six weeks, and during all that time the shepherd used to be with his sheep night and day. The shepherd used to feel that he and the parson were brothers of a trade, and had both difficult lots to deal with; but with that exception he liked nobody. Above all, it was said a shepherd must quarrel with either his master or his sheep. The master had bad hay which he wished to use, or frost-bitten turnips which he could not make up his mind to regard as a dead loss. If he had duly lined with straw the fold prepared for the breeding ewes, and it became sodden with heavy rains, he grudged the cost of replacing it. I should explain that in my time the Cholderton farmers did not prepare sheep immediately for the London market. They kept them in inferior condition, sending them up, as they were called for, to be fattened nearer the metropolis. This, I am told, is quite altered.

Lady Nelson let the shooting with the manor-

house. I never saw any game, unless it might be a hare or two in a twelvemonth; but in the more distant part of the parish there were tracks, and in those tracks I several times found springes. I should think the tenant, a Peninsula officer, saw more springes than hares. A gamekeeper without game to keep is ridiculous. Walking about the down to see what was to be seen, the captain had frequent conversations with the shepherd he found there. Giving him half-a-crown, he one day dropped, 'If you see any fellow laying springes, or prying about, I wish you would let me know.' This the man could have done quietly enough, for his cottage adjoined the grounds of the manor-house. Somehow it transpired. As it happened, the tenant-farmer, who hunted in pink, asked the captain to dinner, and the captain declined. Coming upon his shepherd, the farmer asked him whose servant he was, for he heard that he was serving two masters. This the shepherd stoutly denied, and stated the case. The farmer thereupon charged him the next time he saw the captain to tell him he was not his servant, and would not take notice of people on his account, or give him information. The man had promised to do this, and he now said he must hold to his promise. So, after spending twenty-two years in the same place and the same ground, he now spent the rest of his life—for he was an elderly man—breaking stones on the roadside.

I had many talks with the poor ex-shepherd, who now saw more of the parish and more of the travelling and walking world. He had his eye on the sheep of both the farmers now, and he frequently

forewarned me of disasters. Whether from over-driving, or in one of those panics which are of daily occurrence in the open country, a flock of sheep had rushed too precipitately down a bank, and the result was a dozen or a score ewes cast their lambs. A few acres of frost-bitten 'roots' cost a farmer a hundred sheep. The discarded shepherd had other troubles. He had married a woman much too young and handsome for him, and she cared less for him than ever when he lost his shepherd's pay.

The history of Salisbury Plain is written, or left, on its surface, in mounds, coins, rings, brooches, and other bits of bronze. Modern agriculture is fast effacing or carrying away these interesting records. I found a good many bronze coins, chiefly those of Carausius and Allectus—if I remember right, two pretenders to the purple, who rose rapidly to power, and were as rapidly disposed of. My antiquarian friends told me that bushels of these had been found. The pretenders had but little of the precious metals, so they coined bronzes to pass current at a nominal value far above their intrinsic worth. As long as the alternative lay between taking this money or parting with commodities for no money at all, these coins were taken. When the pretenders, one after another, were slain, not only did the coins lose their fictitious value, but their possession was construed into a proof of treasonable compliance with the enemy, and the possessors put to death accordingly. So they were quickly thrown away.

CHAPTER CIX.

SALISBURY PLAIN IN THE THIRTIES AND FORTIES.

FOUR years ago there came out 'Clerical Reminiscences,' by 'Senex,' with a chapter headed 'Wiltshire.' It is a lively and amusing work, and it was appreciated by the public, at least by the newspapers and their readers. The chapter and name seemed to have a particular attraction for them. It is short; and it pictures, as in a most amazing state of neglect, 'a pleasant town on the borders of the Wiltshire downs, with its mayor and corporation, its market-place, its town-hall, its four thousand inhabitants, and its rectory and vicarage.' It then relates how the writer gathered a congregation, restored harmony, built a vicarage, and paid for it, all in two years, only leaving when called to a much more important charge, as well as one he could live on, in the north. After long trying everybody's patience to the uttermost, the author's predecessor had chiselled out from a new gravestone the words, 'Prepare to meet thy God'; for he would have no Methodism in his churchyard. The Bishop had ordered him to replace the words, and rather than do this he had thrown up the living. The description reads very like Devizes, where in my time were some great lights of the Unitarian community, and, on the other hand, two very remarkable churches in very different styles of architecture. It is altogether a mixed and border place, and it seemed to me scarcely fair to present it as a sample

of Wiltshire. The prominence given by the press to this particular sample suggested to me the necessity of fairer and more comprehensive county or diocesan records than any likely to be given by an Indian chaplain on sick leave, giving two years to an exceptional parish, in the interval between a long residence in India and a longer one in Yorkshire.

This two years' residence must have come within my twelve years' residence; and as my own experience of the county was very different, I could not but grieve that so ugly a specimen should obtain currency in quarters where Salisbury Plain might easily be credited with any amount of backwardness, and even wickedness.

There was indeed one other such case, and it was the scandal and talk of the county. Travellers through the Plain were shown at any distance where lay the unhappy parish subject to this visitation. A wretched incumbent had quarrelled with everybody except his clerk and his daughter, or daughters. Sunday after Sunday he performed the service with no other congregation. He wished for no more, and he scowled fiercely at a stranger, concluding, no doubt justly, that he had come to pry into the nakedness of the land. Everybody had tried to bring him to reason, in vain. He stood on his right, and insisted on the justice of his contentions. He was now a misanthrope in a surplice. Of course he had become isolated, for his clerical neighbours ceased to associate with a man who was a disgrace to his profession, and with whom remonstrance was unavailing.

But we have no need to go back fifty years or to

Salisbury Plain for like instances. I could beat the case of this wretched man with another from a very good neighbourhood, where a born gentleman, formed by nature to lead and adorn a private circle, with a fine figure and a good address, a good scholar, and good college associations, made himself absolutely alone in the world, having quarrelled with every relative, and not being able to call even his clerk his friend. Bishop, archdeacons, rural deans, squires, neighbours, talked with him for hours, all to no purpose. His horse alone he cared for, and that because it carried him well and wherever he liked to go.

Other cases I have known not quite so bad, but equally obstructive and impracticable. Among twenty thousand clergymen there must be some of every sort. Practically there is no way of dealing with them. It is the old story of one man being stronger than the whole world, if he will throw away all scruple, and abandon himself to one impulse or one idea. Nothing is easier than for a man to think himself right and all the world wrong, in which case it becomes his right, indeed his duty, to punish the world, and obstruct it to the full extent of his power.

Of course, ecclesiastical law, in letter as well as spirit, does meet such cases, and theoretically an idle or unworthy minister is as removable in the Church of England as he was in the days of St. Paul. But if any bishop in these days were to put the law of the Church into force against such men as I have described, he would most probably be beaten, and come out with much damage to purse, health, and credit, not to say temper as well.

Ought this to be so? It is easy to say no. It is easy to say that the Church ought to be as competent to compel its servants to do their duty as any ordinary head of a household, any master of a shop or of a mercantile office, any department of the civil or military service. But there is all the difference in the world between spiritual duties and any other. It really is impossible to make a man do his spiritual duty, for he may shirk it in the very act, and do it in a way that is utterly perfunctory. He may keep up a respectable show of obedience, and be doing more harm than good. The duty is inevitably optional, and there seems no alternative but to bear the neglect of it, and to apply, not force of any kind, but persuasion and example. Work is never so well done as when it is quite voluntary; and it is wonderful how much good work is done upon no other motive than the good-will of the doer. But to show what the diocese, at least the part of it I knew, was at the very period described by this writer I will give a few names.

Bishop Denison and Archdeacon Lear, I am sure, would leave no stone unturned, no opening neglected, to impart to a man the sense of his duty, and to induce him to do it. The Bishop, of course, might not be invoked, nor would he intrude; and he would have the sense not to waste time and labour on an utterly impracticable object. But he would do whatever he could. Lear made it a rule to visit every parish in his archdeaconry, and to have serious as well as pleasant talk with the clergyman. Such in fact he did, and such he had, in my case.

My rural dean was Fulwer W. Fowle, Vicar of Amesbury, who held that living in uninterrupted residence for near sixty years, and when he died had baptized most of the people, most of their fathers, and many of their grandfathers. He was in constant communication with the whole of his parishioners, scarcely ever leaving his parish. He had many a good story, which he used to tell in his pleasant racy style, and make me promise not to repeat. Are these promises for ever? If so, much will be forgotten that deserves to be remembered. I will give a reasonable interpretation in favour of an instance or two.

An elderly relative, related also to Jane Austen, and of the same name, lived alone in a good house, with a good income. She wanted a housekeeper, and bethought herself that, as there was very little to do, it would be the very place for some poor soul a little past work, and likely to be in trouble if she could not find easy quarters and an indulgent mistress. She advertised in these terms in the county paper, and for weeks was besieged by applicants. Upon one being announced, the lady went into the servants' hall, when there hobbled up to her with a crutch a very decrepit old body. 'Well, my good woman,' she said, in her kindest tone, 'how are you?' 'Pretty cripply, thank you, ma'am,' she replied. With a gratuity for her trouble, she was told the place would be too much for her strength.

The Amesbury water meadows, like the meadows on the Isis and the Cherwell at Oxford, yield abundant but precarious crops, and the farmers seldom save the whole without damage. One year they did. It

was a good crop, and well housed. Meeting one of his largest farmers, Fowle, who remembered many a year of complaint, said cheerily, 'I suppose you're all quite satisfied.' The farmer thought for a moment or two, and then replied, 'But now there'll be nó fusty hay for the cows.'

Three miles off I had another rural dean for neighbour. This was Frank Dyson, whom I have described above as overflowing with kindness and talk, and remarking, in that mixed vein, upon my frequent journeys to town. He had no official relations with me, so this was a case of diffusive benevolence. His brother, Charles Dyson, was an abler and better-known man, and I only mention him to secure against a confusion of the two. Frank Dyson had a very fine presence, and was a very interesting talker, though even of that good thing there was sometimes a little too much. In the midst of hunting and sporting men he was simply a naturalist. He used to maintain that the colours of flowers were more brilliant in Salisbury Plain than in the less pure atmosphere of Middlesex. Rightly or wrongly he deprecated the practice of obtaining nurslings from suburban gardens, where they are forced by shelter and good soil, and planting them in bleak situations with no depth of soil. Tidworth park, as I saw it, was a new creation, and Dyson could watch the results of a grand experiment at the squire's cost.

The father of the two Dysons had an important office in the House of Commons, and was a man not only of larger experience, but of more original talent than his sons, as a small volume of poems for

children indicated. Through his father, Frank got a good position close outside the west door of St. Paul's when the Prince Regent went to the Thanksgiving for Peace. The Grenadiers lining the approach, seeing that the handsome lad was privileged and knew more than they did, allowed him to stand between them. As the Prince Regent was passing, one of them said, 'Here, young fellow, tell me who's that holding up the sword before the Prince.' This was the Duke of Wellington, whose face was not known even to the Guards in 1814. As far as my recollection goes, the duke was not an every-day spectacle, and was indeed seldom seen all the time I was at Charterhouse, that is, till 1825. Hurrell Froude, who derived from Keble a great admiration of the duke, used to say that even after the battle of Waterloo the nobility chose to regard him as a soldier of fortune, who would soon find his level in society, as many a great soldier and great sailor had done before him. They even combined to keep him in his place, while the duke himself seemed equally disposed to take things as they were.

In after years the duke came to be one of the sights of London. When I took up my residence there, my country friends would ask me how they could get a sight of the duke. Rickards did. I took them to the entrance of the House of Lords, well before a quarter to four. Punctually at the quarter the duke rode up, and was carefully helped down from his horse, everybody around trying to exchange a bow. Before the clock struck four there came another figure hardly less interesting This

was the tall but rather languid frame, and the benign but anxious face of his secretary Lord Fitzroy Somerset, Lord Raglan that after was. One disappointment there always was, 'I thought' the duke was a tall man,' everybody said.

Robert Money Chatfield had then, and till his death, two years since, the Rectory of Woodford. He had a very high sense of pastoral authority and duty; indeed, as a clergyman he was just what I remember him at Charterhouse, and what he would be at Trinity College, Cambridge, where I see he was fifth in the First Class Classical Tripos. I think I must call him the leading man in our monthly clerical meeting. But I had many a long and sharp discussion with him. I would not hear his Millennial views with common patience. Most of the Messianic prophecies he interpreted by a personal reign of Christ in a miraculously conquered, reunited, and regenerated world. At the crisis of a great struggle, in which the Russians and their confederates were to be on the point of destroying the last remnant of the chosen people, the Messiah, he confidently expected, would descend and destroy all His enemies. The Temple would then be rebuilt, the Daily Sacrifice restored—indeed the whole Mosaic ritual and ceremonial, as I remember. It is difficult to say what quarrel he could have with the Oxford Movement on spiritual grounds, but a quarrel he had. He reverted to the topic continually. I paid him a hurried call five years ago, and upon my reminding him of our old controversies he gently observed that all that had passed away. At this call his wife, whom I

remember so handsome, so charming, and so full of humour, was too evidently passing away—as she has since, her husband following her.

John Owen Parr, incumbent of Durnford, was occupying a large mansion belonging to Lord Malmesbury, with a considerable body of high-class pupils, some of whom have done him much credit. The mansion was historic, having been occupied by Harris, the author of 'Hermes.'

More recently it had been occupied for a long time by some ladies of the Harris family, to whom, I suppose, it was indebted for a broad border of peacock's feathers running along the dado, the cornice, and the corners of the large drawing-room. It was said that the ladies wished to secure a daily call from the doctor, and to have such a regular plan of payment as to save the trouble of reckonings. So the butler had orders to lay a five-shilling-piece every morning on the corner of the mantelpiece nearest to the door. The doctor, after giving the news and making some needless inquiries into the health of the party, sidled, or rather retired backwards to the door, laying his hand on the mantelpiece and acknowledging the result with a slight bow.

Parr, I daresay, talked to his farmers and labourers as he did to his schoolboys, and there was much mutual misunderstanding. He was obliged to have a quick temper with his boys, and a quick temper makes sad work in a parish. He was very glad to give up both his country parish and his school, and take the living of Preston, in Lancashire. 'I shall at least have minds to deal with,' he said. But I am

afraid that he found Lancashire minds as subject to earthly distempers as those of Wiltshire. Some Roman Catholic nuns must have found his weak point, for they interrupted both his slumbers and his services with their bells, and had the support of a large Irish population. However, Parr did much good work there, and was, I believe, one of the original promoters of Rossall school.

Thomas Leech Tovey, of Chitterne, was very well-intentioned and very zealous, but sadly cranky, sadly crotchety; all corners, and consequently all collision. He had continually small rows with his parishioners, and these he gave us the full benefit of. They were always presented to us in such a way as to make even advice no longer applicable. Nothing could be done, so nothing more could be said. I suspected 'a screw loose,' as they heartlessly say. He took to church restoration, his first motive in that direction being a unique stone chancel-screen which had been a little misused. The parish would do nothing; so he resolved to do it himself, and spent months in picking and scraping off with his own hands the coating of mortar. The work was scarcely finished when poor Tovey was seen to be pining away. After a short and painful illness he died, when it was found that he must have long suffered from a tumour pressing, so it was described, upon the brain.

CHAPTER CX.

SALISBURY PLAIN IN THE THIRTIES AND FORTIES

FRANCIS J. BLANDY had then, and for many years after, the living of Netheravon, where Sidney Smith was curate for two years, and could not get a lemon for his roast veal without sending to Amesbury for it. The old parsonage by the roadside I remember; as, too, the poor incumbent then dwelling in it. He was a very simple being. There was a certain wildness in his look that bespoke compassion, and he was said to be on free-and-easy terms with his poor parishioners. His end was tragic. A chicken-bone stuck in his throat. The servant ran to the nearest helpful neighbour, the village blacksmith. He came quick, and inserted one of his tools, when the poor man died under the operation.

Blandy was very liberal, very kind, and very zealous. His wife, the very good sister of William Tyrrell, Bishop of Newcastle, N.S.W., took half, and eventually more than half, his village work. After building a new parsonage, and laying out gardens and grounds, he turned his attention to the church. This proved a very difficult subject, the edifice, as it now stood, having been evidently built in connection with the fragment of a larger Norman church, the old chancel arch probably being converted into the west entrance.

All the neighbourhood was invited to inaugurate the completion of a great work. Bishop Denison

was received at the churchyard gate by some twenty or thirty clergymen, and twenty of the chief parishioners carrying long white wands. After the service the Bishop came to a collation at the new parsonage, and went into every room of it, and round the new pleasure-grounds. As soon as his lordship had driven off, the clergy returned to the dining-room. 'I say, Blandy,' one of them called out, 'why wasn't the dean here?' 'The dean!' Blandy replied; 'why should he be here? I didn't ask him.' 'Then won't you catch it. Don't you know the dean 's your bishop; for this is his peculiar.' Blandy was aghast. It all came upon him. What made it worse was that the dean had given him the living. This was one of, I believe, fifty peculiars over which the dean had episcopal jurisdiction, a remnant of papal usurpation.

Blandy resolved to make amends for his neglect at the earliest opportunity. Mrs. Pearson had monthly receptions at the Deanery, and at the next Blandy presented himself. He waited till a good many clergymen had arrived, exchanged greetings, and formed a circle. He then advanced to the dean and his wife, 'Mr. Dean, I come before you as a defaulter. I find I have made a sad oversight. I ought to have asked you to take part in the reopening of my church. But the truth is, I entirely forgot you.' The dean's answer was not reported to me, but Mrs. Pearson's expression of countenance was, and it was more than words could tell.

On one occasion I walked forty miles for the pleasure of dining at the Blandys. The distance was ten miles across the Plain; and I then thought

nothing of it. I accepted an invitation, and I suppose destroyed the note, or forgot to refer to it. On presenting myself at Netheravon, I found I had mistaken the day, which was the day after. After a cup of tea I returned home. I repeated the walk to and fro the next day. In not one of the four journeys did I meet a soul.

A fine fellow of a dog I then had seemed to understand the absence of man and dog as well as I could do. I took him on a distant call I was making. Just outside my own village he found a hedgehog, which made a ball of itself. After some frantic efforts to break the circle, he carried it in his bleeding mouth ten or twelve miles. Approaching a village he hid it in a hedgerow, knowing that otherwise he might have to defend his prize against capture by other dogs. Upon my return he went at once to the spot, and after some searching found the poor little beast, which he brought home.

R. Webb, a scholar, and an agreeable gentleman, having a little income of his own, and taking a pupil or two, served Dorrington faithfully for many years for no more than 40*l.* a year. A pupil of his I came across in after years in Devonshire. This was Pinkney, for some time Vicar of Cullompton.

Giles Pugh, with his handsome Scotch wife and his pretty little ones, had the curacy of South Newton—always a hard-working man, indeed never happy unless 'agate and about,' as they say in the north. His family increasing, he took a house in the Close at Salisbury, almost adjoining the Deanery, and served one of the city churches. The dean and his lady had

done with young ones themselves, and were rather disturbed by the aviary next door. Being disappointed of some expectations, Pugh took the chaplaincy of Naples, which he held for many years, being a great part of the time our only representative there, Lord Palmerston having withdrawn the British Minister. I am bound to acknowledge the very great hospitality he showed me and a large party of ladies when we spent a month at Naples in 1857. Pugh was always ready with his pen when the occasion offered, and had sharp controversies at Naples on education and spiritualism, the latter with an American professor of the art.

My nearest neighbour was Price, Rector of Newton Toney, between whose church and my own lay Wilbury, the seat of the Malets. There I often saw, not long out of his petticoats, a handsome courageous little fellow, the present Sir Edward Malet. He was got up in some continental fashion—Dutch, I suppose, for his father was at The Hague. The mother was Lord Brougham's step-daughter. She told me that even within a walk of The Hague the peasantry fared much worse than our Wiltshire labourers. They could not afford good bread, and they had to be content with hard pears fried in oil. It was said that she felt the loneliness of the country so much that she walked a couple of miles every day to the Exeter turnpike-road to see the coaches pass and be assured she was still in the civilised world.

Price had been Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, and the Master of Bromsgrove School. On taking the college living he had married a very clever

lady, who had kept a high-class school at Salisbury. He was elderly, nervous, and not strong. However, he followed my example and entirely rebuilt his church, beginning long after mine, and finishing long before. I was made one of his committee ; and, having to attend, I remember being most foolishly, indeed wickedly, impatient at the very proper limits he was imposing, now and then, on the expenditure.

The rector, now in years and failing health, had not the courage to appear at the consecration of his church. He went altogether out of the way, and was very sufficiently represented by his wife. Bishop Denison preached. His text was Isaiah lv. 1, the verse concluding, 'without money and without price.' We were assured that it had never occurred to his lordship that there was, under the circumstances, a special appropriateness in the last words.

Price was said to be fond of fishing, and to have had some good streams near Bromsgrove. When Newton Toney fell vacant, he went to see it, having some dread of Salisbury Plain. An abundant stream of clear water flowing past his garden gates decided him at once. He asked what they called it, and was told it was the 'Bourne.' When he came to take possession, bringing his tackle with him, the stream was gone. Ordinarily the water of the Bourne sank into the chalk near Tidworth House, and only reappeared at the southern extremity of Newton Toney. Nor did it seem likely that any rectification of the river levels would mend matters.

Once in three or four years the water in the wells gave warning by gradually rising to the ground

level, when the water would begin to ooze out everywhere, actually flowing out of the cottages into the road, and compelling the poor inmates to lay down hurdles and planks. At some remote period attempts had been made to secure the last of the receding water by digging large pits in the watercourse. There was one sunk at the lower end of my own village. After my time this was cleared out, I suppose for the same purpose that it was originally planned for; and there were found the horns and bones of deer, and even of extinct animals, that had come here to drink, and that had died, or possibly had fallen a prey to big carnivora lying in wait for them.

Phelps was serving Wilton, and his brother another parish. I only remember that they were good men.

Charles Harris, whom I had met occasionally at Oriel, and who was the most winning and agreeable of men, succeeded to Wilton in my time. His wife was sister of Smith O'Brien, who, I have been told, was much the same ridiculous fellow at Eton that he came to be on the more public stage of Irish agitation. We spent a day at Wilton Rectory. The son, an only child, had fallen on a fender and hurt himself. The wound refused to heal, and affected his whole system. That morning he had seen a cat watching a robin with evil intent. It possessed his whole soul, and in the most piteous tones he kept imploring his mother to protect the bird from the cat. Nothing would satisfy him, though I don't remember that he suggested the only effectual way. Not long after the poor child died.

Harris was made Bishop of Gibraltar, that is, of

the Mediterranean. I met him in 1870 as I was coming away from a grand ceremony at Rome. 'You're in your diocese,' I said. 'No,' he replied, 'Rome is a papal peculiar.'

Edward Caswall, of Stratford-sub-Castle, I have told something of in my former Reminiscences; and something, too, of his brother Henry, at Figheldean, on the Avon. I return to the latter. Here was a man of singular observation and shrewdness, combined with an equal power of exposition and narrative. He was one of those who have much to say, and who can 'talk like a book, without stop or halt.' He could tell more about the Churches in Canada and the United States than anybody in England. I never heard of any exception being taken to his published accounts of them. Perhaps the pace of talk in this country, and the general impatience to have the pith of the anecdote and the cream of the jest in five seconds or less, might resent his fuller style. But to think of his being thrown away on a spot where there could hardly be within two miles of him a man who could say where the United States were, except that it is a long crossing!

Henry Caswall had a great admiration for the Jesuits, whom he had seen building churches and organs, and casting bells, at St. Louis. I found him making an organ, which he completed.

He was once in a bad railway accident in the United States. The train was making up for lost time in a long, winding decline. His fellow passengers knew the state of the case. They took out their watches, and they betted on the prospect of making

up the time. By-and-by the pace, which they could measure, left no doubt that at such a curve they could hardly escape going over. 'The driver's a plucky fellow,' they said, 'for he's in the post of danger.' Thereupon they prepared for the worst, and it may be as well to describe how they did it. They all formed themselves into balls, as hedgehogs and spiders do when they are frightened, by gathering themselves, legs, head, and arms, into the smallest compass and compactest form. The train went over, and they rolled and bumped about, getting plenty of contusions, but no broken bones. Caswall did the same, with the like success.

Landing once at New York, and having to travel many hundred miles into what was then the Far West, he was advised to transmit his money, fifteen hundred dollars, I think it was, through a bank. He received an order on a bank at the city he was going to, and also a letter to the banker. Arriving at his destination, he delivered the letter in person. It was after banking hours, but he was asked to dinner, and very hospitably entertained. When the banker found himself alone with Caswall after dinner, he told him he had come at the very nick of time, for the bank would not be able to open its doors the next day. 'But come along with me,' he said, 'and you shall have your money.' Saying this, he took him into the bank, which was at the house, and opening a safe, handed him the dollars. Whether there was any undertaking as to secrecy I do not remember. I am not sure that this might not be called a doubtful transaction, and that therefore I am not justified in

revealing it. But of one thing I am pretty sure, viz. that I should have done what Henry Caswall did, pocketed, or rather bagged, the fifteen hundred dollars.

I suppose the real reason why Caswall was banished to Salisbury Plain was his deafness, a much greater affliction to those about a man than blindness, and a much greater obstacle to co-operation. I found him in a square house built inside the corner of a square garden, surrounded by high walls, and with a careful avoidance of the picturesque. Whose fancy it was I know not. His wife had seen nothing of green England when he brought her there, and she naturally concluded that Salisbury Plain was our equivalent to the Far West. She could not be made to believe that the few trees she saw there had been planted by the hand of man, and that there was any design in keeping the axe off their roots. But what most surprised her, and what indeed she could not be made to understand, was that the strong, hale, hearty fellows she saw about were paupers, who when off work could ask for relief, mendicants for any dole or gift, unable to pay a doctor's bill or a school fee, or to lay by against the hour of need.

At the next parish, Fittleton, there was a complex household. A Fellow of Magdalen had taken the living rather late in life, with no idea of marrying. He was a very good scholar, a Hebraist I think, and had a large library. Under the circumstances he was glad to avail himself of the society of his much younger brother and his very clever and agreeable wife. So he threw out a large, airy, handsome room, off the quietest corner of the parsonage, and there pro-

posed to ensconce his own individuality, and his own library, taking a turn every now and then in domestic society. From his own point of view the arrangement was perfect. But when the lady came to see the still unfurnished house, the moment she put her foot in this room she took possession of it for her drawing-room; and the kind and gentle rector at once recognised the necessity. Henry Philipps, the married brother, was also a scholar, but more read in modern literature and 'in languages.' The whole party was inclined to High Church, as the interior of the village church soon showed; but I found there was a little recalcitrancy in the people. A very ornamental alms-box was carried off in the night, and found open and empty in a meadow. The robbery was charged, perhaps without reason, on the Puritan faction.

My own immediate predecessor in the rectory of Cholderton, and from the last years of last century, I have described in my former 'Reminiscences'; and I have also said a few words of two curates who had served the church before the French Revolution. I have, too, noticed the curate who had resided in the parsonage from its building, to myself coming to residence. This was Walter Blunt; a sportsman, a florist, with a powerful delivery and a good style in preaching. He filled the church, indeed overfilled it, I may say, for I was told that, besides the complete occupation of the Communion rail, several men would sit on the Table itself. There was delay in filling up the living, for all the Fellows, including myself, passed it over. This became known, and the consequence was that

everybody in the village signed a petition to the College to give the living to Walter Blunt. This was not simply because he was a gentleman of good family, and of genial manners, but because he did his duty, and stuck to it.

Sadly disappointed were two pretty little girls, born in the parsonage, for they could now no longer jump down into the bottom of the chalk pit, from which the parsonage had been built, and which was now the straw yard. It was a feat I shudder to think of, though the possible hurt was rather a case for the laundress than for the doctor. Mrs. W. Blunt was still a handsome woman, and will be identified by those who know the engravings of that period, as the lowest face in a circle containing two other portraits. I think the subject is 'Congratulation.' Mrs. W. Blunt is made to show her side face, looking upwards, in order to hide a cast in her right eye.

CHAPTER CXI.

SALISBURY PLAIN IN THE THIRTIES AND FORTIES.

WHEN we came to Cholderton Rectory there was residing temporarily in the house opposite a newly-married couple, the very type of bride and bridegroom, for I thought them the handsomest couple I had ever seen. Christopher Fawcett was Rector of Boscombe, Richard Hooker's church, three miles off. He was adding some good rooms to the very small parsonage

there, and meanwhile occupying our manor-house, the property of Lady Nelson, a relative of his wife. Fawcett combined stature and noble bearing, gentleness and strength of expression, with those blue eyes and that mixture of pinks and lilies that men, and women too, admire or quiz, as they are disposed. The bride, who had been Miss Foyle, and a frequent visitor at her uncle's in the manor-house, had a very fine figure, and beautiful features, with the great singularity, rather than blemish, that one eye was dark hazel, and the other, like her husband's, light blue. The painter who did her portrait chose the eye he liked best, and hid the other. Fawcett was a well-read man, but strong in French and Italian, and he was a scientific botanist. She was not less accomplished in her way. I can remember no couple to be so admired, not to say envied, by ordinary mortals.

Fawcett hunted. It was necessary to admission into Mr. Assheton Smith's circle. 'If you don't go to the meet now and then,' Walter Blunt said to me on our discussing the neighbourhood, 'you'll only know a few parsons.' I replied that 'I shouldn't like to die out hunting.' He answered that he had hunted with the Tidworth hounds now for many years, and all that time there had been no serious accident, only a spill or two.

In the following winter, a few months after this conversation, we were told that our neighbour had been brought home on a hurdle, much injured. It was a very common story. Fawcett's bulk and frame required a good and strong horse—I have always been told the true secret of good horsemanship—but his

means had obliged him to be content with a young, untrained Irish horse, of no great power. They were crossing the country at a good speed, when they came to an old wicker fence, no barrier, but precluding the sight of the ground immediately on the other side. This happened to be a road with deep ruts. The horse came with his feet in a rut, fell, and rolled over his rider, once and again. When they gathered round Fawcett and asked him how he was, he answered that he was alive, and had his senses, but that he could not move a limb.

It was more than was expected when he was laid upon his bed, still a log with life in it. Doctors came quickly from Salisbury, and Sir Benjamin Brodie from town. He might live a few days, possibly longer; he might die any moment. The injury was in the neck, but there was much hope when it was found in a few days that the operations of nature were not wholly interrupted.

We soon heard of many similar cases, more or less encouraging. A navy lieutenant taking in stores from a barge in a rolling sea, had miscalculated the movement of the barge, and upon leaping into it had received a shock which he felt as a jar in the whole system. He shook himself, but went on with his work. The day after he felt stiff. The next day stiffer. This became permanent. Though he lived for years, he could but just move a leg or an arm. A drayman had fallen under the wheel of his own waggon, and was carried helpless to the hospital. There he lay till he required shaving. When the barber had shaved one side of his face, he turned the head to bring up the

other, when the man was at once a corpse. In the act of turning a very small splinter had cut into the spine.

Slowly, but steadily, Fawcett recovered power. A brother from Durham came to help the poor wife. The brother had the same tastes, and whenever I saw Fawcett there were Italian authors and botanical works lying about. After some months he could feed himself; then sit; then stand; then walk across the room. The new drawing-room, and bedroom over, at Boscombe were now finished, and Fawcett was moved there. In a twelvemonth we were surprised to hear of his walking, and feeling confidently hopeful of a complete resumption of his strength. It would yet be long before he could mount a horse, or even stand the jolting of a carriage.

One keen cold day, the next winter after the accident, much to our surprise they called, having walked the three miles, taking their time about it. We pressed the use of our little pony-carriage for their return; but it was declined. He got home very late, but very tired. To my estimate he never advanced upon that day, and I have often reproached myself for not having acted more energetically upon my own misgivings.

I saw him frequently for the next dozen years; but he was always, one might say, a cripple, walking slowly, and raising his arm and his cold hand very slowly. But it was a lesson to see how his heart, his intellect, and his temper remained the same in this very sore affliction; hers too. I have mentioned in my notice of Bishop Burgess that Fawcett had to renounce his executorship under that prelate's will.

For half a year or so I helped Fawcett with a service at Boscombe, and saw much of the parish—very small, and I think the most of it in the hands of one farmer. The village, the church, and the parsonage all lay as low as could be. This would be in order to be nearer the water, and for the greater depth of soil found in the valleys. Shelter, too, is nowhere so appreciated as in Salisbury Plain. In the whole of the long, narrow, winding valley, the waters would sometimes rise in the chalk to near the surface, sometimes indeed quite up to it. I had to bury a child. The water was within a foot of the surface, and the sexton hid it, or created the illusion of earth, with some very light sods. The light coffin gradually sank into it. This was sad enough. Some time after I saw the grave dug for a well-known and highly respected registrar of Salisbury Cathedral. It was directly under the lofty spire, and the water was within eighteen inches of the pavement. As I remember, the pulpit, the canopy of the font, and some other woodwork at Boscombe Church were of Hooker's time. Fawcett lived to a good age, long surviving his wife.

In 1852 he left Boscombe for Somerford-Keynes, and was succeeded by Thomas Taylor, the sole survivor now, I believe, of all my contemporaries in that neighbourhood. Taylor was then at Idmiston. He was a good scholar, and had had for a pupil Huntley, one of the best, if not the best scholar at Oriel in my time, though the only one who had not been to a public school. I well remember the pleasant and always gratified expectation with which I used to listen to his construing in class. Idmiston church and

parsonage were both in a dismal state then. In a snowstorm one Sunday, the snow made its way through the roof and settled on Taylor's head and shoulders in the pulpit, giving him a long and serious illness. His parsonage I heard of from his predecessor. When he came to see Idmiston and asked for his future residence, the people smiled. 'There it is,' a man said; 'but I doubt if you'll be able to get into it.' The floor was two feet under water. He had to get chairs and planks and hurdles conveyed into the building, and so, in a stooping posture, he was able to pass from room to room, just clearing the rafters and doorways. I remember a bad epidemic at Idmiston, when it was said all the people on one side of the stream were affected, and none on the other.

At Idmiston I was taken to a large irregular room on the roof, whether of the parsonage or of a farmhouse I forget, with little casemented windows looking out in several directions over a rather circumscribed panorama, indeed below the level of the Plain. But the walls were covered with quotations in various languages, describing rapturous delight in the survey of nature. The room had been occupied last century by a well-known writer who challenged criticism and got enough of it. This was John Bowle, F.S.A., an Oriel man, commonly called Don Bowle by his friends. I was told at that time, and I took it literally, that he had translated 'Don Quixote' into English, and, after an interval, translated his translation back again into Spanish. So far so good. But the story ran, he was then so satisfied with his own Spanish version that he had published it as an improvement on the original,

and in the hope that it would find currency in Spain. A madder thing can hardly be imagined. But I suppose this was only the ghost of an old joke at the poor man's Spanish scholarship. I see that in 1777 he addressed a printed letter to Dr. Percy, announcing a new and classical edition of 'Don Quixote.' This was published in Spanish, with various readings, notes, and illustrations from other authors. It was not a translation, and Mr. Bowle utterly disclaimed the ambition to do justice to Cervantes, except as assisting people to understand him. Bowle seems to have been the very type of the *littérateur* of that period, writing to magazines, journals, and men of note, always with something in hand.

A little on my side of Boscombe was Allington, with ninety souls all told, and a dilapidated little church. This was held by Fowle, together with Amesbury, and to eke out the scanty income of that living which Fowle could not have held but for the great liberality shown by Sir Edward Antrobus upon every possible occasion. I served Allington Church frequently. Fowle at last put a curate into the place, lodging him with an old farmer and his wife. This curate was William Grey, of the Stamford family. His quarters did for him, for he was content with the smallest attendance and the simplest fare; but when he was visited by his sister fresh from an establishment of twenty servants in India, she freely expressed her sense of the low estate she had come to.

Grey was a thorough ecclesiologist at a time when I was beginning to pass out of that vein. I think he allowed himself to be the victim of an excessive reac-

tion against my own rather extravagant work at Cholderton. Collecting some twelve or fifteen hundred pounds, he took down his church, already crumbling to pieces, and rebuilt it with scarcely the slightest deviation from the original structure, only good masonry instead of bad. It certainly was as dark, and dull, and cheerless as before. Grey went through a chequered and rather unsettled course, having always dangling before him the remote possibility of succeeding to the Earldom of Stamford. How little does the vulgar world realise the number and the fearful significance of the blanks in the great lottery of the Peerage!

He went out to Newfoundland as chaplain to Field. I remember his telling me, among other incidents, that in the way of duty he was obliged to keep a sailing-boat, as he had to cross bays and lagunes. He rigged it for speed, which was an object. One night it was scuttled and sunk in deep water. This was by the Irish, who had made a law of their own against any improvement in sails, as telling against the days in a wages account and the number of boats wanted.

Grey settled at Exeter, and being at last compelled by the state of his health to give up duty, he employed himself for several months in renovating and embellishing, according to his ideas, the interior of the Church of St. Mary-Steps. It is a quaint little building on the steep ascent from the Exe to the High Street. The work involved much scraping, dusting, and painting. I regretted to see a valuable life so risked, for I had seen the result before. Grey became seriously ill. I went to see him. It was cancer, or something of that sort, in the throat. He lingered a

long time, though incapable of even swallowing food, except by some artificial means. At last it was a question whether he could live from one day to another. But to the last he was, I may say, even brighter and more cheerful than I had known him in health, perhaps because a certain quaintness, approaching to queerness, had now given way to a more serious tone. I attended his funeral, rather an imposing affair, a guild doing the last honours. His only son survives.

I find I have left unnamed some not without claims to notice. There was Newton Smart, of Farley Hospital, a member of our clerical meeting, and a man who could speak to any length on a public occasion, and set everybody to rights. He lay south-east, some dozen miles of Plain intervening. There was Alt, a good scholar, who had, I think, been a master at Christ's Hospital. There was my exceedingly amusing and genial friend, and some time assistant curate, Iremonger, from Clatford—now known as Frederick Assheton Lloyd, Rector of Bullingdon.

Donald Baynes I have described as endeavouring to make the Bishop of Winchester take the patronage of his rectory that his aunts had bought for him, in order to be clear of the sin of simony. He had supplied his church with an episcopal throne for the chance of an episcopal visit, and with a splendid jewelled chalice. The use of these was offered and accepted for the consecration of my church in 1850. How should they come? They could not have come in a better way, and much did I wish that I could have seen it. The throne, with its lofty gabled back, was set upright in a cart, and Mrs. Baynes sat in it, a

singularly pretty, spiritual, and mediæval figure, holding the jewelled chalice upright in her hand. In this way she came nearly five miles of open Plain, I trust meeting a few Exeter coaches. Bishop Denison, to my regret, but not to my surprise, declined the jewelled chalice, and chose the plainer one.

About Thruxton, Donald Baynes's parish, were four clergymen all six foot four high : Vander-Meulen, a hearty good fellow ; Samuel Best, of Abbot's Anne, a frequent ' deputation ' for the Societies ; Smythe, and another whose name I forget. Let it be noted that I am reckoning the Plain to begin at Andover, as Gilbert White did, and as the London newspapers did when a lioness attacked the Exeter Mail at the ' Pheasant Inn,' between Andover and Salisbury, and all but devoured one of the horses. Nor can I omit a very good couple who did their duty well at Amport while there, the Morgans, afterwards at Ham.

As I box the compass I recall another name. It was Hadow, who was once accosted in the Plain by a rather impudent-looking fellow asking for alms. He declined and passed on. The fellow crept after him and felled him to the ground with a bludgeon. Hadow sprang up, closed with his assailant, captured him, and dragged him to his village. The highwayman, for such he was, got his due in transportation. Some years after, when I met a Tiverton clergyman of the name, I alluded to the incident, when he replied that he was the man who had done this deed.

Other names occur to me. There were poor men, on starvation incomes, with large families hard to feed and clothe, still harder to be kept in order under such

circumstances; but still doing their duty, and deserving every allowance. Such was poor Ellaby, at Milston, Addison's birthplace, and one or two others. One, indeed, there was that I used to hear of, but never saw. His village was described to me as the most unseen, unknown, unapproachable place in England. It was in a deep hollow, in the west part of the Plain, two miles from any road, and only to be reached by following the track of cart-wheels. Here was a man of science who followed closely all the new discoveries and inventions, and who by the new electro-plating process turned out capital facsimiles of old carvings and embossed work.

Now, here were some thirty or forty names, within a radius of ten or twelve miles, most of them in the Salisbury diocese, a few in Winchester. They were all men of learning, of mental gifts, of good intentions, and of sound principles, though with their differences, and some with their deficiencies. As regards the great centres of religious or literary circulation, it was in every case something of a banishment. I honestly believe that there was not one of the Christian Fathers of the first three centuries who would not have held it a living martyrdom to be consigned to such banishment, amid barbarians and other cattle. They all did their duty, though encountering many difficulties, and frequently meeting with little encouragement. With all of them their duty was really quite optional, but they all worked for God, and not for man.

CHAPTER CXII.

ENGLAND IN 1820 AND ENGLAND IN 1884.

I HAVE attempted several contrasts of the former days with the present. The survivor of two generations, and who can almost say that he has seen the beginning and the end of a century, has a right to make the attempt. He is, indeed, expected. Such contrasts ought to be palpable and distinct, and, as far as one experience can go, they ought to be data for the measurement of the world's change. I have described Gainsborough, and Derby, and London, and schools, and churches, and opinions, and social formations as they were, but by the light of what they are now. These changes have been partly the result of natural development, or evolution, if that be thought the better word, and partly of great discoveries, wonderful inventions, wars, calamities, popular movements, and of the Divine interference continually ordering these things for good. On this point I hold strongly to the sentiment implied in the motto, *Fortes fortuna juvat*. The Almighty always will interfere in some remarkable manner to assist legislation, or other acts done in reliance upon the first principles of humanity, justice, and truth.

Some years since I met an American gentleman who had been a member of an administration. Now, I have not much to say to American finance. There is an old saying, 'When the devil drives, needs must.' Since the War of Secession, the Government of the

United States has been in great want of money; and it has got money, in what was, perhaps, the only possible way, by a high protective tariff. This gentleman, however, was a Protectionist in principle, as well as in practice, and he thought England mistaken and rash. 'Your free trade would have ruined you,' he said, 'but for the accident of the gold discoveries, which cheapened the precious metals as fast as free trade cheapened corn.'

I never heard a stronger testimony to the presence of the Almighty ordering all things for the good of those that love Him and His laws. It was He, and He alone, who blinded men's eyes to the deposit of all this hidden wealth, for ages, till His own good time; as it had been He, and He alone, who scattered or imbedded the gold where it lay. The Californian gold deposits had been known ever since the days of Sir Francis Drake, and I myself saw many newly collected samples of it in London several years before the discovery was blazed abroad and the rush began. So, again, the Australian gold-fields were suppressed for years before they were finally divulged. Even they who confine their ideas of Divine Intervention to a belief that the Father of Spirits converses with the spirit of man, must recognise in these simple facts ample scope and a large range for a trust in the Divine guidance and help. The discovery is not made till at the right time our eyes are opened. There is nothing in the world that the eye of man is so sharp to observe and so likely to keep in view as gold; but that natural instinct, as it may be called, though quickened by universal competition, has not prevented

mankind from being obstinately blind to enormous wealth, forcing itself upon our notice, and only waiting to be picked up.

Again, the principle of the electric telegraph has been known for over two centuries, and its application on a small, but sufficient, scale was one of the amusements of my boyhood. Seventy years ago all the world was familiar with the fact that an electric shock would pass instantaneously from one end to the other of a wire of any length, and, if I remember right, it had been found to pass instantaneously along coils a mile long. We now know the enormous significance of this fact. But a hundred thousand philosophers of all nations were to stare at it even more stupidly than so many sheep gazing at an unknown intruder into their pasture, till it pleased the Almighty to open their eyes to better purpose.

I am no worshipper of wealth, yet I cannot help seeing that the vastly increased resources of the country have rendered possible and successful many changes that would otherwise have been very risky experiments. We can now deal more mercifully and wisely with offenders of all kinds; we can temper justice with charity in our dealings with the poor; we can educate the whole nation by means of teachers and buildings that would have been thought extravagant two generations ago, and that some old-fashioned people think so still. We can even contemplate a universal extension of the political franchise. We can do all this with the dignity of those who mete out from their own abundance at their leisure and discretion. *Deus nobis hæc otia fecit.*

The addition to the universal comfort, security, and means of enjoyment under all reasonable heads, is so obvious and so great that if one does not dilate on them it is not from any fear of contradiction, for that is impossible, but because one would be sure to incur the charge of worldliness, or something of that kind. People who are devoting their whole energies to self-aggrandisement or self-indulgence are nevertheless lynx-eyed to detect a too secular regard for the welfare of the working classes.

I will content myself with one point of contrast between England as it now is and England as it was two, indeed I might now say three, generations ago. It has forced itself upon me so often that I should hardly do justice to myself if I did not declare it. In my younger days there was heard everywhere and at all hours the voice of lamentation and passion, not always from the young, not always even from the very poor. In towns and in villages, in streets and in houses, in nurseries and in schools, and even on the road, there were heard continually screams, prolonged wailings, indignant remonstrances, and angry altercations, as if the earth were full of violence, and the hearts of fathers were set against their children, and the hearts of children against their fathers. No doubt it was so in the time of the poet who filled the vestibule of Hell with squalling children. But, as I have said, these were not all children who brawled or lamented in the open air, and in the mid-day, filling the air with their grievances, and resolved, as they could not be happy themselves, none else should be. Such a picture would be pronounced at once utterly

inapplicable to the times we now live in, but I leave it to almost any octogenarian to say whether it be not a true account of England as it was sixty or seventy years ago.

CHAPTER CXIII.

CASTE.

WHEREVER I have been, in either a clerical or a semi-clerical character, I have found the question of caste a continual and sometimes a painful difficulty. It does not require a man to be a clergyman to be aware of the difficulty. The Bible finds it a difficulty, and leaves it a difficulty. The Bible finds it a fact, and leaves it a fact. The preaching of our Lord drew the multitudes, the hungry and burdened multitudes, the accursed multitudes, as the Pharisees felt and called them, the fickle multitudes, as they proved themselves. The pariahs showed themselves still pariahs, and the castes remained castes. The first Apostolic preachings and breakings of bread from house to house were attended by the thousands. But there always ensued a certain rebound to things as they had been before; and as the Church gradually formed, the rules of government given to it were such as an aristocrat and an economist might now easily agree upon.

Nevertheless the Church continued to present itself as a universal communism. Such indeed it was initially and potentially. As such it won the allegiance of slaves, soldiers, and barbarians, undermined

the empire, and overthrew ancient and magnificent religious systems. But in the Church itself there has ever been inconsistency, self-contradiction, fundamental questions of both polity and faith, and, perhaps above all, the question whether it were a caste or not, and whether caste ought to be its dominant idea. Was it not the Kingdom of Heaven? Had it not to hasten that kingdom? Had it not to take form speedily and for good? The instinct of caste survives as strong but as unsatisfied as ever. We forget that we are not justified in asking for laws, commands, or exact definitions, when we are promised the spirit of wisdom and truth, and have to govern ourselves.

Slavery is accepted, and allowed, in the New Testament, and slaves are even recommended to be in no hurry to accept freedom even when it comes within their reach. An Apostle who knew what he had to say to a slave living under fixed and often favourable conditions, might well hesitate to say a word tending to create a new crowd, with its sphere and rules of life still to find. Yet, in the face of this reticence and caution, it is now universally agreed that we owe to the gospel the extinction of slavery.

It is the same with castes. All feel that they are antagonistic to the gospel, and that, as the Church becomes not only universal, but authoritative and dominant, castes will disappear. Yet, at home, at the very centre of a busy propagandism, under and within the very walls that send forth missionaries to all nations, castes, even clerical castes, are born and bred, and multiply and strengthen themselves, and divide the Body of Christ.

Under an established system like ourselves, claiming a mid place between two worlds, looking to its heavenly foundation as an origin and authority, and to its earthly foundations as the practical conditions of efficiency and existence, every clergyman is a personage, and an authority human and divine. Whatever he says or does is an ordinance. He sanctions and perpetuates caste. He even creates it. He cannot speak, or act, or move about, or take any part in the shifting scenes of life, without repeating the great miracle of creation in a social chaos never quite reduced to order. Even unconsciously, and himself possibly observing no law but caprice, or selfishness, or passion, he is forming the mass about him. He throws his light on it, he divides the antagonistic or dissociable elements, he makes mountains and deeps, he hollows channels; he distributes and allocates the families comprised in his sphere in their fitting quarters. Be a religion ever so anti-caste, if it has the least pretence to be called a religion it creates caste. Anti-caste in time becomes caste. The highest caste in the city of Philadelphia are the descendants of its Quaker founders. A good many Hindoo castes cannot boast a greater antiquity.

Putting out of the question the Church of Rome, which in regard to our insular affairs may be deemed antique, alien, and purely ancestral—that is, just as we think of Britons, Saxons, and Danes—the Church of England is the mother, the teeming mother, of the religious castes of this country. Her proper caste is a certain ideal, framed to express and to meet both our heavenly and our earthly aspirations. The ideal may have

become as merely a shape as the form left by the hare on the yielding turf, or the atomic surfaces suggested by Lucretius as the only account to be given of ghosts, or of souls. True Christian life may have entirely disappeared from the caste, but the slough remains, and even passes from that which was once, so to speak, inside of it. But they, and many they are, who cannot find room, or place, or scope in the said caste or slough, start movements which in due time 'cake,' as it were, into castes or sloughs, with all the imperfections of the parent caste. In their turn the new castes find themselves as cabined and cribbed as the old; and so they go on multiplying, departing wider from the parent stock, yet still obedient to a centripetal force which prevents the centrifugal forces from sending them into space altogether.

By the survival of some feelings over others, I have come to contemplate with a kindlier regard the immense progeny of castes—that is, of establishments, sects, denominations, or what not—with which the Church of England has filled not only every city but every nook and corner of this isle, all so like their dear old grandmother, all lavishing so many airy promises on 'babes,' and so many solid fulfilments on the 'wise and prudent.' Happily in this house, divided, and endlessly subdivided, against itself, and in this city of Babels striving to out-top one another, there is still heard the gospel call, still the history of the Church's first Eastern and European foundations, and still the very words of our Lord, and the few brief and awful sentences that sum up the theology of apostles and evangelists.

The Church of England, if the greatest sinner in respect of earthly pretensions, being indeed the original example, has been the greatest gainer by the increase of liberty and toleration. It has lost many rights, privileges, and monopolies. Such a lopping and topping has it suffered that it is now the mere trunk of what it was half a century ago. But it is very much freer to act, and, if liberty be worth any honest price, it has gained on the whole. It has multiplied its churches and its services, increased its congregations, and added to its still insufficient staff some thousands of poor men dependent on their exertions, and many hundreds of rich men bringing their fortunes to its service and to its prestige. But the greatest of all changes has been the removal of many bars of doctrine and opinions between the Church and Dissent. Whatever Dissenters may do, the Anglican Church dissents much less from Dissenters than it once did. But it would almost seem as if all these changes have only sharpened and intensified caste. It is a universal complaint that the new clergy are more sacerdotal, whether out of church or in it, and have less common ground with other people, whether rich or poor. They may be more at home in their churches, it is said; but they are less at home in their parishes, or in the world. Even if they are not always more theological, they make it up by being more Brahminical. Nor is this a question of High or Low Church. They are all the same in the matter of caste. The 'Ritualist' may be doing more to define and embody his caste, but the 'Evangelical' finds in caste the supplement of a sentimental theology. When he is reminded that there is no sub-

stantial difference between what he preaches and his Dissenting neighbours, and therefore no real obstacle in the way of union, his answer is that they are not of the same caste, and that castes will never work in harmony. Caste congregations must have their own caste ministers.

Then, even the clerical caste subdivides, and within it are the metropolitan caste, the country caste, the richer and the poorer clergy, the well-placed, the ill-placed, and the unplaced. Every cathedral includes under its hospitable but discriminating vault at least three clerical castes. As the Church widens its tabernacles, or stretches its cords, it will embrace new varieties of caste. But all these clerical castes are as one against all the lay castes, and even with a wider and deeper line of demarcation against all the Dissenting castes.

It seems almost presumptuous to ask whether there ought to be these social barriers, or whether they accord with the spirit of the gospel, when so many good and wise people maintain them to be necessary and inevitable. Life is intolerable, and all action neutralised or marred, unless it be with those who think, feel, and behave themselves as we do ourselves—that is, as we credit ourselves with doing. It avails little to observe that much of this caste is fictitious, invented, and even pretended; that much of it depends upon the merest accident and circumstance; that a clergyman of lower clerical caste may be a perfect gentleman, and another of a higher caste a very vulgar fellow. It avails little, because if a man, by virtue of his office, is entitled to insult everybody about him, he is pretty certain to

know it, and very likely to practise it, for there is nothing a man knows quicker, or better, than that he is on the top of the mountain, or the pinnacle of the temple.

To every possible appeal that can be made for spiritual fellowship between all that name the Name of Christ, there comes the same deadening response sounding the knell of generous and friendly aspiration. 'There must be caste. People are really of a different caste. No union or co-operation can prevent caste. Different castes may say the same, and think the same, but they cannot live together.' Then, unhappily, it is a matter so plain as to be an ordinary subject of popular satire that each religious caste has its own style, its own favourite expressions, its own recurrent occasions, when, be the argument what it may, a single word is to carry conviction, or to strike deeper than even thought can go.

Caste founded entirely on a faith or a Church is but slightly affected by a very considerable departure from its original position. A man may be well known to reject every article of the Christian faith, and to break habitually every commandment of the Law, and yet remain an acknowledged, and indeed appreciated, member of the Church of England caste. He is still of the caste. He respects its style, its tone, its tastes, its society, and its great toleration and delicacy in the handling of spiritual questions. He is ready to grant that, constituted as people generally are, they must have a religion, or at least must profess one. In which case the Church of England is better than any other.

If all is to depend on the facts of the case, and we

are to subordinate our whole being to things as they are, then we must accept caste, in all its forms, multiplication, and evolution, as a development or modification of the gospel. The fact, as it is certainly the most conspicuous feature of this present state of things, so it is the soonest known and learnt. Every child is a little Hindoo before it becomes a Christian, and every year, if it brings no other knowledge, instils deeper the difference between class and class, and everybody's first duty to hold his own. No sooner does a social circle begin to form itself than it directs its first attention to the exclusion of those whom it may deem incompatible, or likely to interfere with its own upward aims.

No one enters life, no one goes to college, no one is thrown into a neighbourhood or a new employment, without receiving on all sides the advice to rise, because there is no mean between that and falling; to attach himself to the best society, and beware of all that is lower. In not a few cases the hope of rising in the social scale is an important part of the speculation on which a man is destined for orders in the Church and sent to college.

Within my own experience, which is almost entirely rural, clergymen generally enter upon duty fully possessed with this responsibility, and abundantly furnished with special instructions. No doubt they have heard much of caste, and they have also heard that the clerical caste is lubricous and beset with dangers. You may slip off your balance any moment, either by weakness of temper, or by excessive good nature. You may in a moment rashly estrange for

ever, or, still worse, commit yourself to an unwise familiarity. So the young clergyman is warned whom he must see at the hall door, whom he must see in the kitchen, whom he may invite into the parlour, to whom he may offer the refreshment most to their taste, with whom he may interchange teas, whom he may ask to dine, and which of his parishioners he may invite to meet his clerical, or other neighbours.

These niceties become more delicate and anxious in the ascending scale, for there the several classes formulate themselves and their respective pretensions. Farmers are naturally, and by necessity, gregarious. They must meet at the weekly market table, and there they cannot but discuss the tithe-owners and the landowners. Like the rest of the world they have wants and grievances, and like the rest of the world they sometimes meet with denials, which they don't always take kindly. A young clergyman will soon be reminded by his friends that some aggressive or ambitious member of his flock is 'only a farmer.' Should there arise any question of game, he will find he is expected to take the 'gentleman's' part.

Of course there are the like difficulties in towns as well as villages; but Providence has cast me in villages, and it is the country form of the great question I have most seen and heard of. The Christian minister is there put as the head or front of this difficulty, which, as he can easily aggravate, he can easily abate. What rule has he? Does the gospel throw any light on his path?

It will be replied, possibly, that the gospel teaches us to make the best of things as we find them, and

not to attempt violent change. It does not direct us to revolutionise governments, to abolish indifferent customs, to reform institutions, or to alter the established and useful relations of classes. It allows emperors, soldiers, and slaves. This is consolatory as well as true. But many an elder clergyman must be painfully conscious of having stood too much upon his social position, of having made his pastoral function too much an affair of caste, of having needlessly repelled the advances of some who only appreciated too highly the advantages of his society, and of having denied to those whom he did not think quite gentlemen their best chance of winning that title.

Hitherto the difficulty, and the antagonism also, have been much increased by the most lamentable want of education in the class of tenant-farmers. A century ago, a large proportion of them went to 'grammar schools,' as they were called, and learnt Latin. So great is the change this century, that I declare I have never yet met a single farmer who was likely to know the sense of a single Latin word. This might not be deemed a great loss, but the farmer's ignorance of history, of geography, of science, of the fine arts, and of many matters of common utility, is quite on a par. They have generally so little mastered the elements of any branch of knowledge that the very sight of a book only suggests an insuperable difficulty. Opened once or twice, it is shelved or closeted. Literature becomes an incubus in this case, and a cloud of darkness on the uncultivated understanding. The clergyman becomes positively

afraid of taking his guest for the evening out of his depth, and giving the occasion for some ridiculous mistake that it would be even painful to think of.

It is this ignorance of common subjects that most creates and perpetuates caste. Whoever thinks there is no harm, no danger, in sharply defined castes, he will not see the necessity of teaching young farmers what they need not learn. He will rather be content to see them choosing their own lines, and going their own way, and keeping to themselves.

But there really is very great harm, and very great danger, in their seemingly immaterial and even happy ignorance. The clergy lose thereby that certain access which all knowledge should give to the hearts and understandings of their flock. If they were more *en rapport* with their hearers, they would find their sermons better understood, and would also be induced to take more pains about them. It was the glory of the monastic institutions that they were the centres, the depositories, and the fountains of such knowledge as perpetual wars and a continual succession of calamities had left to the earth in those days. Every parsonage might now be that in its manner and proportion. After all, it is not the well-informed, or the well-read, who wish to break the barriers of caste and ride roughshod through mansions and parsonages, but they who think one man generally as good as another, so as he has money, and a well-to-do farmer a much better man than a needy curate.

It seems to me that the best course is not distinctly to recognise caste, yet not to infringe upon it, but to put it out of the question; and this can best

be done by friendly intercourse on the largest possible quantity of common ground. There is no reason why the best part of the parish should not meet frequently at the parsonage or the school, for the purpose of directly improving conversation, after the reading of a paper or some author. The evenings of the parsonage are not always so bright and cheerful, but what even the village might do something to enliven them. The benefit will not be entirely on one side.

I will even suppose, what it is not at all necessary to suppose, that the clergyman may not feel himself equal to the opening of any scientific or literary subject, and may shrink from the chance of disappointing his guests, and even exposing himself. Wherever I have been there have always been within easy reach self-taught men who could say much on chemistry, on astronomy, on mechanics, on foreign travel, on local antiquities, and even on English literature. Almost any town is sure to supply some men of this sort, who would be quite ready to be received as guests for the evening, and to give a lecture, or lead a conversation, from that happy instinct which makes lovers of knowledge love to disseminate it.

This, it will be said, involves a change in the clergyman's position, indeed in the character of the parish priest. As a matter of fact, however, a clergyman very rarely is a parson and nothing more, and the only question is what he had best add to his spiritual functions. It is a case in which his flock has a direct, indeed legal interest; and if he cannot be always spiritual, he ought at least to be useful. For this, however, he requires both education and assistance,

and it leads me to another suggestion. Besides his poor simple parishioners, there is another class that the country parson will find not less beholden to him for any aid he can give to enlighten and cheer them. These are his clerical neighbours and their growing and increasing families. In such a region as Salisbury Plain, and still more in some remoter and duller parts of England, the desolation is sadly trying to the spirits, and full of the temptations that fill the voids of bare existence. It becomes a case for mutual aid in every possible form. After a time the clergyman begins to crave for society, and to find it, certainly for half the year, rare, intermittent, and beset with difficulties. Should he betray too much craving for it, and too much dependence upon it, he may find himself voted a bore. In such a case he has nobody to reproach but himself. It is a man's own fault if he is a beggar, whether for common alms, or for society, comfort, and useful information—that is, asking for it and giving nothing in return.

What I suggest is, that every country clergyman should make it his plan of life to be useful to his neighbours, and to be wanted, and in that case always welcome. In its intellectual aspect, social life is a perpetual picnic, to which we ought all to contribute out of our respective stores of knowledge. Every clergyman may make himself welcome at any country mansion or parsonage, by either assisting their studies, or giving them the fruits of his own. Where there are young people growing up this is an absolute necessity. I venture to dwell on this the more, inasmuch as the practice of some clergymen, and even the advice given

to them by their elders and betters, is sometimes very different and incompatible with my present purpose. A clergyman going down to a rural district with the intention of occupying all his spare time in studying a language, or a history, or a subject, probably with a view to literary work, will find it much in the way, not only of his parochial duties, but also of social intercourse with his neighbours. It will be seldom that they care to know what he is about, or that he is able to give them the benefit of it in an interesting form. The country is not the place for such studies. They are pursued under difficulties, every day increasing. On the other hand, there is no situation that makes more demand on the golden rule of doing to others as you would that they should do unto you. After days, perhaps weeks, perhaps months, perhaps even years of solitude, only relieved by very dull callers, a man begins to hunger after better food than domestic details, or village gossip, or even what the papers tell him. Indeed, he begins to be weary of reading, he wants to see and hear, and to exchange ideas. Feeling this, he may be sure that all his neighbours feel much as he does, and that if he can minister to their craving he will be always acceptable, in fact always a friend in the hour of need.

The great scandal of the Church of England is the want, the increasing want, of parochial solidarity. The parish is divided into sects, and into castes, and into classes, each with a literature of its own, and with less and less of that common ground which might be the basis of reunion. Is there not danger in this state of things? The strength of the Church must be

in its relations, and those relations are far from being in a reliable state now. The relation of the tenant-farmer consists chiefly and prominently in the payment of a tithe rent-charge, which he very naturally, very perseveringly, and not without an earnest of success, tries to bring down lower and lower, the landlord looking on with undisguised complacency. The relation of the labourer is exhibited and perpetuated in the fact of Dissenting chapels rising up everywhere, and being everywhere filled. It is a superior force that now burdens the country with the Establishment; but that superior force can last no longer than the people are willing to submit or unable to resist. Once they know that the question is open to revision, and that it rests indeed with themselves, and they will estimate the Establishment by their own sense and experience of its advantages.

Well, I must confess that I do not think this particular suggestion would go very far to satisfy a nation which still expects the Kingdom of Heaven, and for its sake thinks the less of earthly things. There must be open portals, and there must be teaching to move the heart rather than to rack the brains.

Everybody has to admit that caste is the most serious, the most obstinate impediment to the progress of Christianity in the populous regions most committed to our care. None can wholly suppress a certain misgiving at the obvious resemblance between our own castes and those which fortify beyond all approach the superstitions of our heathen fellow-subjects. People take comfort in what they deem a saving difference. English caste is only a secular

affair, they say, a matter of accident, education, and convenience, to pass away with this outward tabernacle. Oriental caste, on the contrary, so they say, is spiritual and eternal, and therefore a direct contradiction to the high promises of the gospel. Certainly the present is nothing compared with eternity, and the whole world is nothing in comparison with a soul; but what comes under sense and within experience forms the school of eternity, and the sentiments that wholly engross and master us now and in all time cannot but leave their fruit when time is no more.

CHAPTER CXIV.

CREEDS.

EARLY in this century there were even fewer theologians, in the scientific or the dogmatic sense, than there are now. The clergy inquired for books to assist them in the pulpit or in the cottage, or to lend, but not for study, or for personal improvement. There were monthly periodicals, generally with an article or two in reply to Priestley, Belsham, or Carpenter, or to the German school just beginning to be heard of. These monthlies did not pay. Series succeeded series, and if a longer continuity was preserved it was probably at the cost of some wealthy polemic.

I shall be reminded of such works as Routh's 'Reliquiæ Sacræ,' and Burton's 'Testimonies of the Ante-Nicene Fathers to the Divinity of Christ,' and

'of the Holy Ghost.' But there were then no theological schools or colleges at Oxford, or Cambridge, or anywhere else in England. Examining chaplains had to be content with the scantiest show of divinity; and Dr. Burton, I should think, would not have many readers. One of the first things I used to hear on the eve of the 'Movement' was that the appeals made by Arian theologians to the Ante-Nicene Fathers had to be met, not by sifting and unifying the language of the Fathers, which nobody could do, and which there was no call to do, but by simply throwing them over and accepting in their stead the testimony of the Nicene Fathers to the several traditions of their respective Churches. A youth, with a few months to prepare for an examination for orders and to lay in a stock of sermons, would thus find little encouragement to lose himself in what all must call the mazes of Patristic theology. The 'Tracts for the Times' stirred the surface of all clerical life; but for two years they ran chiefly on the constitution and authority of the Church, on its orders and ordinances. In 1835 came out a tract, by Mr. T. Keble, in the form of a walking conversation with a supposed Bristol merchant, on the Athanasian Creed. The writer announces at once that the question between him and his friend was not as to the 'doctrines' contained in the creed, but as to the expediency of retaining it in the Liturgy, supposing any changes should take place in that as in everything else. It may seem strange, but it is the fact, that these 'doctrines,' certainly then held to be fundamental, and a note of the true Church, never did come to the front

in the 'Tracts for the Times.' It would cost a long search through all the volumes to find more than a few incidental allusions to them.

Newman's first publication on 'The Arians of the Fourth Century' came out about the same time as the first numbers of the now famous series, and his successive volumes of sermons spoke often enough and plainly enough on these 'doctrines.' These works, however, were for the more learned and more academic class of clergy. The 'Tracts for the Times' were for all clergy and all people, and their silence on one class of subjects testified to the great difficulties with which it was surrounded

If I am to judge by my own experience, the principal cause of the grievous religious divisions in this island is presumptuous dogmatism upon matters beyond our comprehension, and aiming to fasten upon Scripture, senses over and above and quite beside the plain sense of the text. Wherever I have been I have occasionally found myself in contact with very good people, between whom and myself there was a gulf that could not be passed in the matter of doctrine. Like all gulfs, it was dark, slippery, and dangerous. They did not understand our creeds; they could not think them edifying; they could not regard them as the language of devotion; they did not think them proper conditions of Christian communion; they felt it a tyranny that creeds should be enforced upon unwilling recipients; most of all, they objected to their use as the basis of religious instruction.

Of course I already seem to hear indignant, not to say contemptuous, replies. 'What is to be

done,' it will be said, 'if people won't submit, and don't believe? It's their own affair.' It is their own affair; but something else is our own affair. When there is such a book as the Bible put into our hands, it does become a very serious matter to add to it, to dictate its meaning, to supersede it, to dispense with it, and, I must add, upon a forced interpretation of a few passages, to insist on meanings at utter variance with the whole tenor. Is not this to lay stumbling-blocks in the path of Christ's little ones?

Well, if I have felt thus, why have I not spoken out long ago; and why did I ever put myself in a position which I thought unwarranted, and charge myself with duties I could not sincerely perform? The truth is I have always been loyal to the Church of my country, and my loyalty has made me perhaps over-desirous to make the best of things without a scrutiny beyond my powers. So, even while feeling a great tenderness for simple and honest Dissenters, I have at the same time felt it my duty to observe a certain distance of manner, and not to concede any point to which my loyalty had committed me. I could never have expressed to any Dissenter what I have freely avowed to those about me for many years.

Moreover, one everywhere meets people who hold neither doctrine, nor revelation, nor anything that does not come within the range and proof of the senses. These are the very people who take a hard and fast line as to Church doctrine, and who, in fact, will not allow anybody to think for himself on the

matter of religion. With them it is all or nothing. They cannot conceive that faith and reason should ever go together. They hold to reason. Of course it is useless to discuss dogma with those who think there can be no such thing, and that one dogma is just as great folly as another.

The almost invariable defence of our creeds is that if they be once so much as questioned, then the Christian faith will be abandoned altogether. Though they be obsolete in their language, and even in their ideas, they are a necessary bulwark. At all events, to come out of them into the open field of controversy, and fight over again the warfare of which these creeds were supposed to be the happy conclusion, is, we are told, a needless risk. To my apprehension such replies make it a question between a strong man and a weak man—that is to say, between a man who feels confidence in his strength and in his cause, and a man who does not. I cannot say that I feel a strong man; but a man can die but once—and I shall soon be out of it.

CHAPTER CXV.

THE COUNCIL OF NICÆA.

OF the Council of Nicæa I have always felt that I had no qualification, or right, to pronounce an opinion. I had no wish to do so. It has been the habit of my mind to hear in it the voice of the Church—that is, of the Holy Spirit—and to disregard circumstances, cha-

racters, arguments, and consequences. We are all accustomed to do that in most affairs, especially political. A general election, with us, is a frightful orgies; the result an oracle. The powers of hell are let loose on us for a season; but they are, as we persuade ourselves, mercifully controlled. Heaven prevails on the whole. If anything would save me from the shade of a misgiving as to the Council of Nicæa, it is that the persons who do not like it don't like Elijah's victory over the priests of Baal on Mount Carmel, or Jael's way of dealing with Sisera, or any other of the great deeds in which faith led the way and scruples had to follow.

Nevertheless, there is that about the Council of Nicæa which returns, and returns, and returns again. It is universally believed to have been the greatest event and the chief turning-point in the history of the Church. Though it is by no means quite true, yet it is an approximation to the truth to say that the creed of the Church was then first and finally settled. The dogma of the Trinity, leading ultimately to the worship of the Trinity as such, dates from that event. In the circumstances and history of the Council there are mysteries which even apologists are obliged to trip lightly over. On the other hand, they take great pains to prove that the Council, its composition, and its decisions, were not the work of Constantine. They have at least a difficult case.

Constantine, though a wavering theologian and an inconsistent Christian, was a good soldier and a clever politician. He could discover his advantage where others saw only confusion, and he could see the right

moment for a decisive charge. It is but a very small proportion of the good Churchpeople who sing or say 'the creed following,' as the condition of public communion with Christ and His Church, who can have the slightest idea of its formation, or of the reasons why it appears without a title in our Prayer Book. Still less can they know why it is commonly called the Nicene Creed, or the when, or the whereabouts, or the antecedents, or the circumstances of the Council of Nice. The Council was so contemporaneous with the foundation of Constantinople that it must be considered a part of that event. Nicæa had much the same position and relation to Constantinople as Oxford or Reading has to London. The crisis was one of great excitement at the supposed shifting of the centre of empire from the Tiber to the Bosphorus. When it is remembered that the whole of the East then lay under the imputation of Arianism, or Arianising, the unanimity of the Council was wonderful, and still more wonderful the rapid adhesion of the very small minority. The most wonderful thing of all—indeed, it is described as something miraculous—was the sudden and unexpected adoption of a Sabellian symbol with such safeguards as would wrest it out of the hands of its original possessors. Greek was then a living language, and the language of the most versatile people in the world. Words then changed their meaning as they were bandied about, and the very form of words a young Christian had been educated to repeat as a saving truth became a detestable heresy before he reached man's estate.

It is said that an absence of only two or three

years throws a man out of the front rank of Parisian society—nay, of French politics too—so great has been the new crop of pleasant, or unpleasant, associations of ideas. It was just so in Eastern Christendom in those days. Orthodoxy was being in the fashion; heresy was being out of it; and an unquestionable saint might return to a great city after a few years' absence, and find himself, without opening his mouth, already the object of a fearful anathema.

That Constantine should wish to settle things, and to put an end to the fermentation that had well-nigh broken up the empire, was natural; so, too, that he should take the opportunity of bringing together the centres of civil and religious unity. The creed, thus captured, as it were, from the enemy, and amended sufficiently to serve the occasion, had to be further amended again and again; and perhaps we owe to the less subtle, but more rhetorical, theologians of the Western Church that for some centuries it enjoyed a sort of finality. It was preserved, one might say, like a fly in amber, in the works of the Bishop of Hippo, the most eloquent, and still the most readable, of all the Latin Fathers. English Churchpeople are not much in the habit of comparing creeds. With them a creed is a creed, as a diamond is a diamond, and it is out of the question to suppose that they may be incompatible, or mutually corrective. When they are congratulated on their wealth in this respect, and told they have a dozen creeds, they don't see why they should not, though a little surprised to hear it. In this childlike spirit they receive the Decrees of the famous Council, that is, the dogmatic decrees, as they

would the Law from Mount Sinai, or any of the wonderful manifestations in which the Almighty Father, visibly or audibly, bore witness to His Son.

Yet I used to hear, and fully to believe, that the earlier the Christianity the better it was; that from the days of the Apostles there was a steady decline of practice and of faith, and that the first three centuries had greatly the advantage over the fourth. Nor did I ever hear that this presumed victory over error inaugurated a great revival and a happier growth. If the Council of Nicæa is to be judged by its fruits, I don't know where they are. At least, I cannot speak of them as I should wish to speak, favourably and cheerfully. Perhaps the Church from that date got on better with emperors, kings, and chiefs, whether Pagan or already converted. Indeed, there certainly is the look of Christianity having then been put into a more endurable, or less suspicious, and a less rival form. Philosophers and statesmen, the simple Pagans of the old faiths, and the simpler barbarians from the east, north, and west, appear somehow or other to have found the new dogma more compatible with their old predilections than what they had heard before.

The Athanasian dogma had a great advantage over the legion of views or opinions classed under the general head of Arianism. It was one; they were many and various. It was unintelligible; they were only too intelligible. It was contrary to reason, and proud to be contrary to it; they addressed themselves to reason and invited inquiry.

It may seem strange and paradoxical to describe

as advantages in a popular sense what certainly are not advantages in the abstract. But as a fact the greater part of mankind much prefer an utter and perfectly insoluble mystery for the object of their faith. A symbol to which it is impossible to attach any meaning can have no troublesome moral import. The man who believed in Jupiter, or in Jehovah, had obligations to him, and feared his wrath. Faith in a triangle, or a complication of triangles—or that, in a mystic sense, three are one, and one three—imposes no terrible obligations or consequences. To believe in the impossible and inconceivable is next to believing in nothing, if it be not indeed the same thing.

Putting aside the differences forced upon them by controversy, and extracted from them by a multitude of Christian sophists, the general idea of the Arians—that is, of the greater part of Christendom before the Council of Nicæa—was that God had sent into the world One who was truly and really His Son, His only Son, and who was so far truly and really Divine. There was nothing inconceivable in this, for it only advanced a step, a great step indeed, on the universal belief of Pagan antiquity. All nations believed in those who might be called Sons of God in comparison with the dark and infinite Divinity before and behind them. Jupiter himself was but the son of God in comparison with certain obscure and many-named deities that he feared and bowed to.

It is the reproach of the Arians that their doctrines addressed themselves to the common apprehension. But for this very reason the Christianity of the Arians was formidable to those who themselves

claimed divinity, as the Cæsars and their successors did: and who trembled at the thought of a king greater than Cæsar. Imperial Rome might not fear polytheism. A crowd of deities, great and small, in groups, families, genealogies, costumes, cults, and fashions, need not appal the masters of legions. Nor need Rome fear much the pliant and many-shaped deism taught by Greek professors. It was a philosophy, a system, a dream. Such a deity was at some remote centre, or far above in the skies, or diffused as a vital principle throughout the universe.

But when the empire had to choose its form of Christianity it might see a practical, and even an immediate, danger in the thought of One who had stepped, as it were, out of the invisible world into the visible, a distinct Being from the Eternal Father, rendering to His Father still the duty of a son, and reigning over this world, and in this world, as in His own kingdom.

I am not here pretending to distinguish between the Arian faiths and that which is called Athanasian. I am noting the appearance they would respectively make to the old world, to potentates, soldiers, and people. And I cannot help feeling that I see why the people who had made up their mind to master and govern the world as they pleased, and to endure no rival, were satisfied to acknowledge Christ as absolutely and physically, for so indeed they understood 'substantially,' one with the Eternal Father.

CHAPTER CXVI.

SABELLIANISM IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

OF the matters before me, which shall I take first? Both press for utterance. Shall I venture, indeed be very bold, to have out my say, such as it is, on the one dogma of all others upon which the Church of England most plumes itself; or shall I begin at once on the cost, the self-sacrifice indeed, which that Church has paid, and still pays for it? Had I the rhetorical art, and the fulness of knowledge necessary for the method, I might build a grand climax by first enumerating the many sad and terrible items of the cost, the long catalogue of losses, grievous alike to friend and to foe, and then saying what I have to say upon that for which the Church victimises itself and a Christian country. Were I to choose that order, I should labour at every step under the imputation of holding truth not worthy of any sacrifice that can be made for it. No art of mine could counteract that prejudice. So I must take the more natural order: I must address myself at once to the dogma.

A dear relative, after speaking very kindly of my 'Reminiscences,' as a whole, entreated me most earnestly to withdraw, or explain away, the chapter on 'The Trinity.' I replied that, sorry as I was to have given pain, yet if I should ever return to the subject it would be to speak much more plainly and strongly. What I wrote had been in my heart and mind many years; many years consciously, besides a kind of latent possession for a longer period.

Thinking over the matter, I have begun to suspect

that the 'Bosworth Lectures' which I found it impossible to mend, and which I therefore returned to the Provost in 1836, were, after all, more in the lines of the Church Catechism, the opening Invocations of the Litany, and the nuptial benediction, than I then perceived.

For more than twenty years I have, sometimes rather vehemently, protested against the interposition of the number Three, or of a triangle, simple or complex, between me and the object of my worship. I have found it impossible to prevent the reappearance of all this stage property on those festive occasions when women, children, parish clerks, and schoolmasters take possession of the church and carry the day.

Thus much, too much perhaps, is self-exculpation. Now what is this mode of description, and this form of invocation, to which the Church of England evidently attaches so essential and fundamental a character? How are we to understand the passages? Understood they are to be in some fashion or other, and what is it? When, as a simple child, saying my catechism, or as a regular churchgoer joining in the Litany, not to speak of other occasions, I style and pray to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, what did I, indeed what do I, mean by the first word in these three clauses? Has the word the same meaning in all?

For my own part I begin reasonably, perhaps too reasonably. In the first clause I understand the Supreme God. It is too evident that this natural sense cannot agree with the sense to be given to the word in the second and third clauses. To make the sense the same in all three we must have recourse to some

theory, and I know not how many theories there may be for the purpose of harmonising these clauses.

Am I intended to mean, 'O thou Divine Essence,' or Substance, or Element, of which Father, Son, and Spirit consist? Or am I intended to mean, 'O thou that art Father, Son, and Spirit'? Possibly the first framers of the form may have intended, 'Thou that art revealed in Father, Son, and Spirit,' or, 'Thou that worketh as Father, Son, and Spirit.'

I must frankly say that I find it quite impossible to attach sense to the words. In my former work I said that whenever I uttered them I felt on the narrowest edge between Tritheism and Sabellianism, if I knew what that was. My learned friend Mr. Litton, formerly Fellow of my college, and author of an 'Introduction to Dogmatic Theology,' tells me that a misunderstanding of the words might lead to Tritheism, but hardly to Sabellianism. I cannot claim a hundredth part of his learning; but I cannot agree with him in this case. The more I think over it, the more do I adhere to my own estimate of the danger inseparable from this form of words.

My heart misgives me more and more that the form is Sabellian, and that the Church of England is grievously tainted with Sabellianism. In this heresy, for so it has always been justly accounted, the Son of God ceases to be a distinct Being, or Person, and becomes only a manifestation, or representation, or operation, or aspect, of the Father. Is not that the tendency, nay, the very significance, of the form of words before us? Is it not to make Jesus Christ, not indeed a new Table of the Divine Law, but a mere personification, or picture, of Divine goodness?

We believe Him whose life and words we read in the Gospels to be a real person, as real, indeed infinitely more real than the persons who surround us and come across us in our daily life. But the form of words before us seems to banish this simple and natural conception. It seems to tell us that it is but a figure in a mirror; a scenic performance, or magical exhibition; at most a benevolent and instructive operation of the Deity, like the return of daylight or of the spring, or the order of Nature generally.

I will not here stay to inquire into the meaning of the comparatively few passages of Holy Writ alleged to prove that the title 'Son of God' does not adequately and fully express the Divinity of Christ, and that it implies more than it declares. I have pondered over them, I may say thousands of times, and thought on them night and day, with the sincerest wish to accept, and as far as possible understand, what our 'orthodox' theologians tell us. I cannot, and do not.

All our Lord's acts and words, and all the New Testament, constitute to me an indestructible monument of testimony to the true and real Sonship of our Lord. I cannot believe in identity, be it ever so disguised. I cannot believe but that He who prayed to His Father, and obeyed His Father, and offered Himself as a willing sacrifice to His Father, and had come from His Father, and who returned to His Father, and who intercedes for us with His Father, and who sits on His Father's right hand, is a distinct Being from His Father. The Athanasian Creed, whatever else it teaches, or fails to teach, does

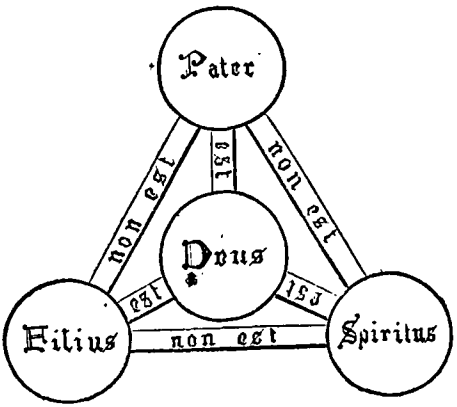
at all events warn us not to confound the Persons, that is, to fuse them into one.

But where is the authority, the history, the tradition of the words 'God the Son' and 'God the Holy Ghost'? It might throw some light on their meaning. They are found in English Catechisms of a much earlier date than the one now in use. But without libraries, and without even the power to make effectual use of them, I must leave that inquiry to others. The words are evidently intended to be an improvement on the Athanasian Creed—perhaps a reduction of that creed to the intelligence of children. The inventors of the form must have reckoned somewhat on the implicit faith of children, and their want of critical power—not to speak of their readiness to use words without meaning, indeed to say just what they are told to say.

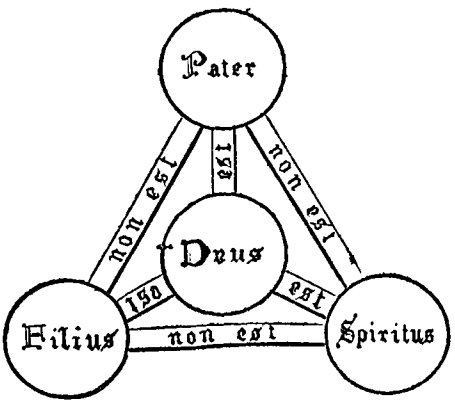
One account of this mediæval intrusion I feel pain in suggesting, for it is almost too ridiculous; but it has occurred to me often, and I cannot dispel it. There is a quaint device for the representation of the Trinity to be found in some old churches, in stone or in wood. From the three angles of an equilateral triangle are drawn three lines to meet at a central point. At this point is the word *Deus*. At the three angles are carved the words *Pater*, *Filius*, *Spiritus*. On each of the three converging lines is carved *est*; on each of the three sides *non est*. To the common understanding, and I should think in theology also, much depends on the direction of the word *est*—that is, whether it be written from the centre, or from the angle; for, surely, to say that God is the Son is a very different thing

from saying that the Son is God. But nothing is more likely than that a carver in wood or stone would feel it more natural to carve the word from the centre, and with his simple ideas of orthodoxy would think it the better. To put the matter distinctly before the eyes of my readers; I will give the two alternative diagrams:—

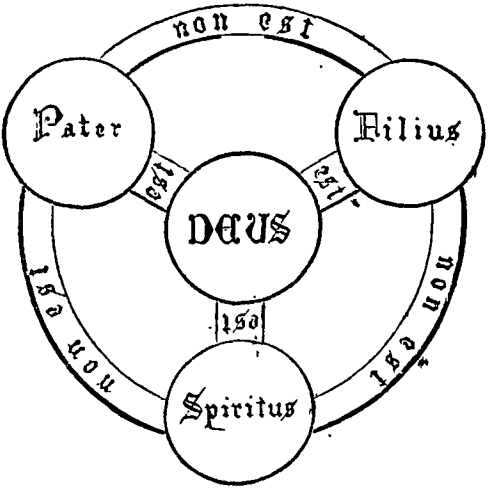
1. *The Athanasian Trinity.*



2. *The Anglican Trinity.*



In A. W. N. Pugin's 'Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume,' 3rd ed., 1861, is an emblem which serves to illustrate how easily one form could pass into another, of a very different significance:—



As this emblem stands, and as it catches the eye, the words that first present themselves are *Pater est Deus: Deus est Filius.* The very intention of the device seems to be that the words may be read either way, as if it did not signify which way they are read. That, indeed, is the comment I suppose I am now to expect even from persons calling themselves theologians. If we say 'the Son is God,' why may we not say 'God the Son'? I answer that if the Bible, the Catholic Church, the Fathers generally, and even the Creeds, say one thing, and never by chance say the other, there must be very good reason for this abstention, and the two statements do not mean the same.

A good Christian, near me, chanced to see my copy of the emblem, and uttered an exclamation of horror, as if it were a wretched piece of witchcraft or conjuration. I am not surprised at it. The repugnance shows true religious feeling. But the feeling is exactly that which the words themselves give me whenever I think of them at all and ask myself what they mean. I observe, in some notes prefixed to this emblem in Pugin's book, that no such representations of the Trinity are to be found of an earlier date than the eighth century, and that in succeeding ages various forms of the representation were strongly condemned, as it appears in vain, by the Catholic Church. I believe it to be one of those instances in which barbarism, or Christian paganism, has finally prevailed over authority and truth. The Church of Rome has accepted and shelved many curiosities, and this amongst them. But there is, in fact, the greatest difference between the case of Anglican and of Roman Christians. Whatever fanciful and unscriptural notions we may entertain as to the supreme objects of our faith, we attempt at least to keep eye, heart, and mind fixed steadily upon them. It is even brought as a charge against the Church of England that it affords little scope for the emotional and imaginative parts of our nature, in its preference of a reasonable—that is, purely intellectual—faith. On the other hand the charge most frequently brought against the Church of Rome is that in its dealings with the people it appeals to emotion and imagination rather than to the intellect, reserving difficulties for theologians, and deciding them by the voice of an infallible authority.

There has also occurred to me at times another explanation of the Anglican Trinity. In some very early form of the Catechism the answers might have been—

God the Father,
God His Son,
God His Holy Ghost.

In each line the middle word would be an abbreviation, and these abbreviations would probably be very similar, *i.e.* y^e, y^s, y^s. Children and copyists might easily come to use the same word, and the clergy might be unable or unwilling to correct them.

As it happens, the first answer in the Catechism is just such a corruption, mainly if not solely due to the copyists. The answer in the text is *N.* or *M.*, and the account usually given is that they are the middle letters of the alphabet. But there is now no doubt the original was 'Nom,' for *nomen*. The syllable would be written in a contracted form, leaving it doubtful whether *M* or *N* came first, and the usual order of the letters would decide that question.

It might seem inconceivable that so great a change as a new dogma of the Trinity could result from such trifling matters. But we have to bear in mind that the true doctrine of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit had, in the Middle Ages, become sadly overlaid, disfigured, and put out of sight by a vast mass of new beliefs. These latter filled the foreground, and satisfied the present need. The Father, Son, and Spirit had, as it were, receded into the innermost heaven, lost to the sight even of eagle-eyed faith, disappearing not so much into a distinct unity as into one dim,

departing glory. If the theologians of our own learned age can contentedly accept a national form of the Trinitarian dogma, it can surprise no one that the clergy of the tenth or fifteenth century should allow it. Yet even in the darkest age of the Church the clergy were sufficiently acquainted with the Latin idiom to know that, in the two affirmations at the head of this page, *Pater* and *Filius* are the subjects, and *Deus* the predicate. We do not say that God is the Son, but that the Son is God.

CHAPTER CXVII.

SABELLIANISM IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

I AM told that though the expression 'God the Son' is not to be found in the Fathers, there are in one or two of them words very like it, and meaning the same thing. But then comes a question. These Fathers, whatever else they might be, had unbounded originality and freedom of thought—indeed, of language also. They were men of great acuteness, practised rhetoricians and dialecticians, earning their bread, some of them, in their youth, by verbal subtleties. If, as is alleged, they made, often made, this statement virtually, why did they never actually make it, but always recoiled from it? If they had never approached it, they might not ever have contemplated it. But if they continually just missed it, as is alleged, they must have missed it intentionally, and they must have had reason for so doing.

As for the Athanasian Creed, which, I say again distinctly and emphatically, does not warrant the expression in our Catechism and Litany, it is usually said to express the teaching of Athanasius. It is a considerable enlargement upon a few of his words, like a long piece of music running on a theme contained in half a dozen notes. The words themselves quoted for this purpose are often, to my understanding, nearly as open to objection as the Creed. But I humbly ask to put a question which it takes small learning, but just a little common sense, to answer. Here is this Athanasius, who fought a battle against the world, a man of war from his very youth. Here is a founder of the Church. How far do his writings stand the test, 'By their fruits ye shall know them'? How far are they calculated to comfort and to edify the humble Christian? How far do they move him to devotion? How far can he even follow them and bear them? In every book of the New Testament, even in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the appeals to the heart and conscience occupy more space than those which in any degree tax the intellectual powers. I have seen it observed that even the Sermon on the Mount, often cited as the model of simplicity, contains difficulties. Certainly it does, but only in the same sense that our daily duties and our personal relations are not always easy to discharge. As Athanasius is not within everybody's reach I will ask the same question of Waterland, his chief Anglican representative: though even Waterland now is not everywhere accessible.

But Athanasius did not himself want for courage

or for words. He seems to have said, indeed, whatever came uppermost. I ask, why did he not say that which I am told is involved in his teaching? Why did he shrink from the conclusion which I am told is inevitable? Why check himself, as it were, at full speed, and decline that leap in the dark? Answer this who can.

Speaking for myself, I may truly say that I am as little disposed as anybody to hesitate at the use of words which I cannot quite understand, or which jar upon my sense of propriety. We are all poor drivelling idiots before the throne of the Incomprehensible. We all speak in unknown tongues, with none to interpret. The homage of our heart is apart from all expression. But the words before us are symbols of faith and of Christian union. They are intended to constitute a line of continuity and a bond of communion. The Church of England declares them the very palladium of her existence. The first question all Anglicans ask of any one concerning whom there are misgivings, or of any church or sect towards which it may have doubtful relations, is whether it be sound in the doctrine of the Trinity, as formulated and taught in our Church. It is a point on which even to waver or inquire is to be condemned. It is in vain that the persons questioned appeal to the Scriptures. 'Do not all heretics appeal to the Scriptures?' it is replied. 'The Bible is a very thicket of deadly heresies. Private interpretation is universal error.'

From the Bible, then, the appeal is to the Church, to tradition, to Catholicity, to the Fathers, to Councils, all of which the Church of England claims on her

side. I cannot recall whether in my early days it was ever once doubted that the Anglican doctrine of the Trinity was the same as that which had all these sanctions and testimonies.

I must now suspect that fifty years ago English Church-people generally thought that one expression of the doctrine was as good as another, and that if you fought for the name of the dogma stoutly enough, that was sufficient. We believed ourselves the legitimate descendants and untainted heirs of the primitive Christians. At the Reformation, to use a common figure, we had washed off some superfluous accretions, without loss of identity. The truth is that while we did then divest ourselves of a good many practices and beliefs of the character usually catalogued as superstitious, we tenaciously preserved with regard to the objects of our faith some expressions, amounting to a creed in themselves, of a recent and obscure origin.

It was in the century immediately preceding the Reformation that the word 'Trinity' obtained its favour and frequency and pre-eminence as the name of the Deity. It had been for ages a mere theological expression before it found its way into the language of devotion. It has often occurred to me that the miserable state of the Papacy in the fifteenth century, and the increasing indignation at the follies and wickednesses of Christian paganism, may have driven good people to concentrate round the citadel of their faith, as the 'Trinity' was supposed to be, but with the rude ideas of men in an extremity. The founders of Orders, after doing what they could to

make Rome reform herself, obtained this dedication for new churches—but not till the city of Rome had a church for every day in the year, dedicated in the name of one saint or another.

Establishing itself on its own form of this dogma, and prepared to stand, or even to fall with it, the Church of England has already undergone no small portion of that fall in the loss of not far from a moiety of the Christian people of this island. 'But,' it will be asked, 'are the English people theologians? Can they discriminate between one form of a dogma and another? Does a matter like that, a breath, the stroke of a pen, turn the whole course of their lives, make them gather round teachers of their own choosing, and lead to the formation of communities vying in numbers with the ancient Church of this island? Are not most Dissenters themselves orthodox?'

It is true that they wish to be so thought. They claim the title of honour. So, too, does the 'Evangelical' section of the Church. Yet whether in or out of the pale, the preachers who address themselves to the simpler sort of hearers insist chiefly upon other doctrines than those that Arius and Athanasius divided the world upon. They claim to preach 'Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.' They claim to exhibit the person, the character, the beauty, the tenderness, the humanity of the Saviour. They claim to declare the power of the Indwelling Spirit. They claim to preach the Gospel and not a code; the work of Christ and not a legal dispensation; a Friend always at hand and not an offended Deity afar off; Calvary, and not the thunders and lightnings of Sinai.

Such claims easily made, not so easily maintained, and very dependent on personal gifts and various circumstances, imply accusation. It is a claim to occupy vacant or neglected ground.

Is it then a wholly groundless charge, that when people ask for the bread of life, we offer them an old riddle; that we puzzle those whom we cannot win; and that, since we cannot gain their affections, we send them away bewildered and despairing?

What is the real faith of the religious poor of this country, as contrasted with the faith of the more educated classes and the more orthodox believers? With the poor generally, including most Dissenters, Jesus Christ is the present Deity whom the old Pagans sought in a thousand ways, and at last made a combined effort to realise or to typify in a universal emperor. Jesus Christ is prominent, all-powerful, in our midst, near to every one that seeks Him, in all the religion of the poor, in their preachings and prayings, and thanksgivings and praises, in their communions, in their houses, at their bedsides, in their solitary hours. The pious old woman of this class talks of 'Jesus'—ay, of 'her Jesus.' Why not, I cannot conceive, though it much offends some divines.

Is it possible to deny that this conception of Jesus Christ is natural, that it is justified by the sacred record, that it is beneficial, that it is in ten thousand instances the difference between goodness and corruptness, between elevation of character and baseness, between happiness and the continual misery of remorse without repentance, unsatisfied cravings, tempers growing worse and worse, blankness blacker and

blacker? Should not this faith, this religion, find its home in the Church of England? I should have to turn my mental gaze from millions in this Christian country, and even forget their existence, before I could answer unreservedly that it does.

In this awful matter, in the very object of our faith, there is, by the evidence of facts, a disagreement —a widening disagreement—between the ecclesiastical authority and the religious people of this country.

I cannot but think that the dogmatic system which takes up the Son of God from the earth He condescended to, and the Holy Spirit from the earth He was sent to, and envelops the Son and the Spirit alike in an impenetrable cloud and inextricable knot, far away from us in the cold and dry limbo of theological speculation, is that which drives away the Christian flock and leaves the fold empty. They seek comfort, guidance, and aid through their present troubles, and the assurance of a happy future. They expect to understand and feel the way of salvation. The Anglican Dogma put into their mouths from their infancy they never can understand.

CHAPTER CXVIII.

VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT.

So far as regards the matter, it will seem a great and sudden descent to pass from the questions propounded in the last two chapters to village improvement. Such, however, is the course of human affairs; and, in

fact, it is in this lower stage of life and circumstance that we encounter the illustration and the test of speculative opinions. When a poor clergyman finds himself helpless to cure, or even abate, any great evils, his chief obstacle being the hopeless disunion of his parish, it is time to look more closely at the conditions of an obligatory union found so unavailing, and so disregarded in the hour of need. Throughout the Bible there is a continual interchange of relations and offices between sacred and secular institutions, and there is no greater proof of the Divine authority of the Book than its correspondence in this respect to the world we live in and to the course of human affairs. Thirty years of village life extending over half a century, and including some of the worst survivals of Old England and some of the most questionable inventions of New England, ought to assist one towards the gravest problems of English society. Those problems, I very much fear, will never be quite disposed of. There are people so constituted as really to believe the golden promises which the world makes every now and then with what I might call characteristic effrontery. How often have I heard in my time the song of triumph over old foes to earthly peace!—'Thank Heaven, we shall have no more great wars! No more invasions! No more panics!' 'Thank Heaven, we have seen the end of the religious difficulty!' 'Thank Heaven, we have finally settled Parliamentary reform!' and so forth. They all crop up again as sure as weeds, and as thick.

The only specific I now can think of for a village, or any other place, is a good and true man doing his

utmost and sacrificing himself for the people; bold and resolute enough to say and to do the right thing under all circumstances, and sticking well to his post. This, I am sure, will always be fairly successful; and without it, no system, no laws, no institutions will;—I will add, no churches, no services, no creeds, no schools will. It may be the squire, it may be the parson, it may be some good old Churchman, it may be some conscientious and pious Dissenter who is the salt of the little world and the leaven of the human lump; but if there be not some one there going about in the image of God that made him, and standing in the midst between these people and heaven above, they will assuredly go to the bad, in spite of all that laws and civilisation can do for them.

When I went to Moreton Pinckney, fifty years ago, there existed no adequate means for the maintenance of order, health, or decency in the place. They that had more muscle in their frames, or more money in their pockets, more audacity or impudence, did much what they pleased, and could not be controlled. By successive relaxations and deteriorations, the Poor Law had been adapted to pacify the people and to create 'food for powder.' The burning question between the village commonalty and the neighbouring gentry was which should have the run of the soil, and the game. I had to thank Tyler and Dornford, and their respective curates, for reducing the chaos to some form before I went there.

Social theorists have now their several remedies, and I may say that I saw some of them by anticipation in full work at this village. There were yeo-

manry and small farmers, but they certainly did not show results worth writing pamphlets to perpetuate or revive. I could not envy the philosopher who should, haply, succeed in reproducing a world of small independent agriculturists, and live long enough to see the outcome. There was a commonwealth of labourers, working very much at pleasure and on their own terms, and always with the rates to fall back upon—Communists, indeed, to all intents and purposes; but they certainly were not the better or happier for it.

There are people who like the poor better than the well-to-do, just as there are people who like animal pets better than human beings. But, as a lady friend of mine says of children, they are only little men and women, so truth compels me to say that the poor are only men and women in a lower condition of life.

At Moreton Pinckney I found myself as much thrown on my own resources, and obliged to do myself whatever was to be done, as if I had been cast on an island of the Pacific among rude and generally inoffensive savages. After half a century of progressive and remedial legislation, and experience of another village almost as primitive, I am able to report progress. At Plymtree I still found that whatever had to be done I had to do it myself. I am most grateful to say that the example stimulated others, and my successors have so far the benefit of my sacrifices. But the great problem of self-government—as necessary in a small community as in a large one, in a village as in a town—has not only

not been facilitated, it has been rendered even more difficult by recent legislation.

I have told the story of my school there. Another episode of my Plymtree incumbency still more strikingly exemplifies the utterly helpless case of the village community under existing legislation, and the crushing weight thrown upon willing shoulders.

On my first visit to Plymtree I could not but be scandalised, as all strangers were, by the state of the churchyard. I was told there had been many attempts to rectify it, but that the dissensions prevailing not only in Dornford's time, but his predecessor's also, had prevented anything being done. Dornford had let out that he wished to retain the lich-gate, and some of the leading parishioners would consent to no plan which did not involve its abolition. But if they had been ever so agreed, they would have found it a very large business. The church ground was the village playground. The children ran wild about it, making paths over the graves, and destroying the tombstones. In Dornford's time the young men played at fives against the tower, or threw stones at the crowned Mother and Child, under their gilt canopy, over the west window. For the greater part of the year, and always after dark, the churchyard was the only practicable thoroughfare between one half of the village and the other half. Very few of the cottages had any land, or any back to them, so precious was the land for apple trees; and the churchyard was utilised for five distinct public *latrinæ*. The fences having fallen out of order, a publican had agreed to build a wall, on condition that he might encroach

two yards into the churchyard, and take the space into a skittle alley. No words, however, can describe the abomination of desolation I found the place.

How could this have come about? The public road ran half round the churchyard, for most of that distance at a depth of twelve or fifteen feet below it. Hence a steep and irregular bank. Against this bank, and occupying a site half in what should have been the churchyard, and half in what should have been the road, were three wretched hovels of very great antiquity, the inmates of which had, for all purposes, to use the churchyard as their backyard. These hovels narrowed the road so much as to render it little better than a ditch, and very dangerous at the corner. This complication of slovenliness, danger, indecency, and dirt lay just between the parsonage and the church, and passing strangers would of course conclude that the rector, as well as the whole parish, must be very apathetic to allow it so long. Whatever the history of the hovels, they were now vested in the Charity Commission. They blockaded the way as effectually as a rock or a stranded ship at a harbour's mouth, and nothing could be done till they were removed.

Upon my first introduction to the village I was amazed at the surroundings of an otherwise most interesting church, and I made up my mind that something must be done. A long time before this, when the Queen Anne Bounty Board refused to pass on to the Exchequer my application for a remission of duties upon the timber, brick, and glass used in Cholderton Church, on the ground that I had been

too long about it, I made a resolution never to spend money upon churches again. This, however, was not for the church; it was for the churchyard and the village communication. So I resolved to attack the difficulty.

But very soon there came the Education Act, and I found that every shilling I could earn must go to keep out the dreaded invasion of a School Board. I did not myself require being stirred up by Archdeacon Freeman for this purpose, for I felt as strongly about it as he did; but I cannot forget his haranguing the churchwardens, in what he was pleased to call a discussion, upon the probably ruinous cost of Board schools and the cheapness of voluntary schools. They interpreted his advice by his example, for it was well known that he had spent a little fortune on his own church, churchyard, and schools. But my clerical neighbours were always at me about my wretched churchyard; and even they of my own household, coming in from their parochial rounds, were full of the indignities they had witnessed on the very graves.

In three or four years my clerical neighbours elected me Rural Dean, and I was duly accepted and sworn in at the Episcopal visitation at Tiverton, I think it was. The Bishop proposed the health of the new Rural Dean, and I had to reply to it. With my usual false humility, I observed that I could not think why my neighbours had elected me, unless it were that I had the most disgraceful churchyard in the diocese, and that it was a hint to me to look to it. This the Bishop never forgot. After several reminders from him, upon his reverting to the subject in his

palace, as I stood in a small circle of clergy, I resolved to begin the work, the cost of which I had already approximately calculated. I knew I should have to sell houses and lands for it. What I might have felt even more was that it was plain the greatest possible success would consist in there being no appearance of anything having been done at all. The formation of the ground was such that I had, and still have, a strong opinion that the churchyard occupies the site of an old British fortification commanding the pass. I had to give the site a more natural and ordinary character.

Preparing my plans, with good advice, I laid them before the feoffees of the village charities, who readily consented, especially as I had agreed with their secretary to pay a handsome sum for the hovels. Then came the difficulty. I had to apply to the Charity Commissioners, who of course knew nothing at all about the hovels. If they had sent a man down, or allowed a reference to some surveyor of known respectability, it might have been done in a day. After three or four weeks they sent a paper of questions. I replied immediately. After three or four weeks more they sent another list of questions. I replied immediately. This was repeated a third or fourth time. I wrote a long, and, as I thought, eloquent and touching memorial, describing the scandalous condition of the churchyard, the worthlessness of the hovels in comparison with the public improvement, the short time I could reckon upon, and the moral certainty that for centuries nobody taking the living would spend three years' income in an improvement which

the parish had done without for many centuries.' How they must have laughed at me—that is, if they ever read my piteous appeal and did not at once throw it into the waste-paper basket.

Then there came a longer pause. My difficulties increased with the delay. For a hundred yards of retaining wall, I had brought from the Blackdown Hills near a hundred waggon-loads of rough stone, and deposited them on the only available bit of roadside common at hand. This happened to be under a deep bank opposite the churchyard, before some land tenanted by one of Dornford's bitterest foes, now no longer a church-goer. He threatened me with legal proceedings if I did not immediately remove it all. The surveyor of the Highway Board had been all along cognisant of my proceedings, which included the improvement of the road. The contractors had always used the spot in question for the deposit of road material. But I had to receive and answer lawyers' letters, which kept me always in apprehension of a suit for trespass. I knew not what else might happen, and I had too many things to do to give all my attention to this.

The state of affairs in London seemed to make my case hopeless. The Charity Commission had just been charged with all the work of the Endowed Schools' Commission, itself terribly in arrear; the double commission, staff, and documents were moving from one house to another; a new Chief Commissioner had just been appointed, who could not possibly know anything about his business, and, as might indeed be expected, had been seized with brain fever, and might never recover.

CHAPTER CXIX.

VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT.

I WAS beginning to despair when Bishop Temple came to Plymtree on a Confirmation tour, and passed the night there. I stated my lamentable case to him, and he at once said that he was going to town in a few days; he could only be there a few hours, but he would call at the office of the Charity Commission, speak a word for me and my work, and urge despatch. But he said he would like to see the proposed improvement and the condemned cottages.

We had barely ten minutes for this the next morning. After a rapid inspection of the churchyard, I brought the Bishop round by the front of the cottages, only one of which was now occupied. Would he like to see the interior? Silence was all his consent. I stood and knocked at the door, and heard 'Come in.' There was no latch or fastening of any kind, and there never had been in my time. I pushed the door open. The Bishop and I stood on the threshold. There was not even a stick or a rag of furniture, or a pot or a pan, in the dark room. In the middle of it a pretty young widow, draped in cobwebs, stood in a graceful attitude, piling indescribable rubbish into a small heap, whether to be burnt or to be carried away one could not venture to divine. She wasn't at all overpowered by the presence of the Bishop, and said a few words of quiet remonstrance. She supposed she must go, as the gentlemen wished it, but she

didn't know where to go, and it was hard to lose a home. I don't know what the Bishop thought of my nearest village neighbour, whose upper window indeed looked into my parsonage ; but as the poor lady had always been the object of very tender interest in the village, and evidently had now become so to the Charity Commissioners, it is almost due to history that I should tell her story. I must first say, in a parenthesis, that since writing the above, and about seven years after this very brief interview, I have had a short talk with the still interesting widow, who had a most agreeable recollection of the Bishop, pronouncing him a very pleasant gentleman.

As I have called her pretty she would allow me to add that she was also rather flighty, that is, rather unaccountable, and acting by fits and starts. She had married young. Shortly after the birth of a third child she lost her husband by a sad accident, and was at once put, with her three children, into one of the 'church houses.' The eldest boy had got out into service at nine or ten, when I came to Plymtree. To me and my people devolved the education of the younger son, and the youngest child, a girl. The widow 'chared,' or took short spells of service, having a continual and rapid succession of quarrels with her masters and mistresses, in which, of course, they were always in the wrong and she in the right. I could not truly say that hers was the longest tongue in the village, but she certainly had some claims to that distinction. Some of her near relatives had prospered, and she felt the world against her. All three children had at last gone out 'to live,' as they say in Devon,

delighted to escape from so wretched a home, and resolved never to return to it.

The feoffees met to distribute dóles four or five times in the year, and they always agreed that this widow was not a proper occupant of a church house, and that it would be better for her to go out into regular service ; but they had not the heart to turn her out, and they compromised by giving her no dole. On at least one occasion she waited for the end of the distribution and the appearance of the feoffees, and, standing upon her own doorstep, rated them all soundly for passing her over, knowing well that it was a rule rigidly laid down and rigidly observed that nobody was ever to find fault with the feoffees. Of course they laughed at her, and she rated them the more.

She had parted with every scrap of furniture, of utensils, and of clothing not immediately wanted, to pay money to a 'wise woman' who had fed her with absurd expectations. One of them, which the poor woman confidently believed, was that she would marry a gentleman, and she had by turns fixed her thoughts on every gentleman bachelor in the neighbourhood as the one intended for her. In her early days she had been in good places, and with her face and figure, aided by a ready tongue, would no doubt win many a look and smile from men who little know the harm that even a trifle may do. So here was this poor silly thing, still *young* and good-looking, alone in a mere den, the door of which had only to be pushed open, close to the parsonage.

The Bishop was as good as his word. He called

on the Charity Commissioners in their new office, and they believed in Plymtree and its Rector. As it was still impossible to say whether the improvement would be ever made, all that could be promised the widow was that she would be the better for it; and this promise she fully relied on. But the Charity Commissioners had been delighted to find so interesting an object as a young widow in the affair, and they made the most of her. Her name appeared in 'schemes,' in large folio sheets magnificently printed, and, if I remember right, published in the county papers. I should have turned the poor creature's brain entirely had I let her see them.

She was to have 10*l.* for the disturbance. But it might be years yet before the affair was advanced enough for the removal of the hovels, and she had left herself scarcely a rag to cover her, certainly not to take a place. So I presented her with 5*l.* My wife drove her to Cullompton, and was much amused to see how exactly and judiciously the widow had planned the expenditure of the sum. In a few days she appeared handsomely, indeed fashionably dressed, and became the object of much admiration, not to say envy. But instead of looking out for a place she made calls and paid visits to friends who could now recognise her. It has frequently occurred to me that she missed a great opportunity. If instead of shewing herself off to her friends in her much-improved form, she had gone straight to London, and presented herself to the Charity Commissioners with the demand of, say, a hundred guineas for the inconvenience she had been put to, they would immediately

have seen that this was the least compensation that could be given for turning a lady out of house and home.

As it was, in a month or two she was back again penniless. I came upon her as she was using her tongue glibly but to no purpose. One of her sons seeing her approaching, and guessing the state of things, had hastily retreated up some steps to his lodgings, and had there ensconced himself behind a wicket-gate. She was imploring him to lend her ten shillings, to go to a place. This he positively declined. I presented her with the sum, advising her to lose no time. When I had completed the purchase of the 'church house,' she speedily found her way to the secretary, and got her ten pounds. She had no difficulty in getting a place, indeed many places one after another, and has been very much the better for the 'disturbance,' not to speak of leaving her name in large capitals in the Plymtree archives.

The tediousness of the affair, and the money that seemed to be flying about, suggested a happy thought to the farmer I have already mentioned, and who was still threatening to take the law of me for depositing in the roadside material intended for the improvement of the roadway. As the village footway was now to go round the churchyard, instead of through it, that involved a deviation of two or three yards from the existing approach to the spot. Distinctly in view of the approaching improvement this gentleman had planted a fence outside the footway before his little property, and enclosed out of the open waste a space not quite so large as the moderate-sized room I am

writing in. Having done this, he now defied the world to change the line of the church-path without paying him 75*l.*

Not only I, but the whole village were indignant, and a sense of justice seemed for a time to prevail even over the much-desired improvement. My legal adviser told me that, whatever the event of a lawsuit, it would cost me much more than 75*l.*, not to speak of the annoyance. So I gave in. I had also to provide woodhouses and offices for a much larger and more substantial block of church houses, whose occupants had hitherto had the run of the churchyard, and this could only be done by carting away several hundred loads of the churchyard itself, and building in the excavation. The whole business cost me 800*l.*

I feel, I hope, a pious, not superstitious, satisfaction in having thus paid the penalty of a very great wrong, as I think I have been fated to do in some other instances. In the Deed of Settlement, signed by the Earl of Huntingdon in the reign of Henry VIII., the site granted for the church houses now standing is described as sixty feet by two hundred feet, and within the memory of man all that area was common land and the village playground. About sixty years ago the three surrounding proprietors, alleging that the villagers were noisy and used bad language, divided this area between themselves. The rector of the day was one of the three, and thereby left me an account to settle for him.

In the existing state of rural society and local government, it is much easier to commit the most bare-faced robbery than to stay it, or to repair it, or

to make an improvement, or to abate a nuisance, or to do any one public service whatever. Landowners are always saying the clergy are not the people to do these things. Why don't they do them themselves?

I must, however, admit noble exceptions. Of course English high-class landowners do take care of the villages in or near which they reside. But most of our villages have no lay residents with the required means, or taste, or disposition. If much is to be done, and this is generally the case, it falls on the clergyman, who has seldom the means to do much. It really is the proper work and the bounden duty of the whole rural community, and it is the divided state of that community that now forms the great bar to rural improvement and civilisation.

CHAPTER CXX.

THE DESCENT OF ANGLICAN TRADITION.

THE two last chapters will be thought to exceed even the usual licence of episodes. True they refer to the House of God, to the ground hallowed by Christian dust, to the poor, and to the kind offices of a Bishop; but what are they all to a charge of heresy brought against the Church of England, and behind that a further charge of overwhelming, or driving away, Christ's 'babes' with impossible enigmas? I must plead first the enforced habit of the country parson.

He is an amphibious being—one day, or one hour, leading worship and unfolding mysteries, the next engaged in the humblest offices that poverty, sickness, and even wickedness can impose upon him. He passes very abruptly from Saturday to Sunday, and from Sunday to Monday. But if this apology be disallowed, let me observe that very few readers do pass consecutively from chapter to chapter; they open a volume often at random, and, after a short survey, alight where they please. At all events I have a right to remind them that I am a parson, and that I have felt that call enough to have made sacrifices for it.

I seem to hear a voice advancing from seriousness to sternness, as if chiding my wanderings, and calling me to the point, and fixing me to it. This, it says, is a question, in which authority must be to all of us the antecedent proof; and the voice of authority cannot be rejected except upon the discovery that the authority is no authority, or a lesser authority. Few, it will be said, are competent to reject, or even to weigh, the authority of the Church they are born in—that Church being also the old Church of the nation. Even if this authority tell us what is impossible to understand, and seemingly at variance with the plain tenor of Holy Writ, still it is infinitely safer to trust to it, than to sally out and roam abroad on a private adventure.

The Church of England boasts many honourable titles. It is Catholic. It is national. It has a grand and romantic history. It claims to be Scriptural, Apostolic, Primitive, and Patristic. It claims to be

grounded on the teaching of the Ante-Nicene Fathers. It claims to be Nicene, as that creed was finally settled; it claims to be Athanasian; it claims to be, indeed, all that Rome ever was, excepting what she had no right to be, or had better not be, and what we have therefore discarded. Finally we are a Reformed, and 'pure' Church.

But how far are these high-sounding titles established by the history of the doctrine of Father, Son, and Spirit, whether in the Church generally, or specially in our branch of it? Let us admit the actual continuity. Let us be the Catholic Church as it was from the beginning. Let us rejoice, as we may rejoice, to trace our consecrations, ordinations, and confirmations back to the very hands, and very breath, and audible words of God's Blessed Son. Then how stands this Church with regard to the doctrine committed to its charge? We need not read many books or consult many divines for an answer to this question.

The Church of England starts fair. It is Scriptural. But it goes on to explain that it is the sense of Scripture that is Scripture, and that therefore its own first title has to be qualified. It falls back on its second line of defence, the Primitive Fathers, who, however, were very speedily and very much corrected by the Fathers of the succeeding centuries. How often, even before the Oxford Movement, did I hear of the solid ground of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, whom at that time, in my simplicity, I supposed to be harmonised and formulated at the Council of Nicæa! I had heard of differences, vestiges of Judaism, or strange

philosophies, but I took for granted that the truth had emerged.

It is quite plain, however, that the Council of Nicæa, for one reason or another, and under the pressure of very extraordinary circumstances and very influential personages, harmonised not the Fathers, but the living schools of theology, and, in point of fact, tried to determine the doctrine of the Church. This was done with great ability, and, we may presume, sincerity; but the actual result is that the Church which stands on the Nicene Creed does not stand, in the same sense, on the Ante-Nicene Fathers.

But the new foundation, for such it really was, had very soon to be disturbed, and the creed which we call Nicene is in fact that which was agreed on by the Council of Constantinople half a century later. Long after that later Council a clause of the highest importance was gradually forced upon Rome by the Western Churches, and, without the authority of either Council or general consent, added to the Constantinopolitan Creed, thereby dividing the Catholic Church into the Roman and Greek Churches.

Long after that, from the same remote and half barbarous region, there gradually came into use a new creed, largely taking the place of the Nicene, and more in the nature of a mathematical demonstration. After centuries of resistance, Rome, as of old the *sentina gentium*, accepted, and immediately shelved the so-called Athanasian Creed, which certainly introduced some novelties, of speculation, if not of faith. No Church that uses the Athanasian Creed can be called simply Nicene.

But long after this very late novelty, there came up another from some obscure quarter, the mistake of a copyist possibly, the creed introduced in the form of an invocation at the beginning of our Litany, taught to children as the essence of the 'Apostles' Creed,' and sounded in the ears of our future fathers and mothers in the Marriage Service. The adoption of this creed materially affects our allegiance to all the authorities that came before, and gives us a distinct place in Christendom. Anglicans we are of course; Romans we don't wish to be, and are not. But it becomes a grave question what else we are.

We are not simply Scriptural, because we claim to put a sense on Scripture. As it is not just our own sense, we call in the authority of the early Fathers. As they differed much, we accept the Nicene Creed, but discard it for some improved creeds of a later date. By none of them do we describe ourselves so much as by the last great creed of all, the so-called Athanasian. On the back of this, now for three or four centuries, has ridden a very simple and comprehensive creed of our own making, which, till lately, was forced upon everybody in these isles as the condition of Church membership, and even of matrimony.

What then has become of the high-sounding titles so long dinned into the ears of all who pretend to a judgment of their own? We are neither Scriptural, nor independent searchers of Scripture, nor Patristic, nor Ante-Nicene, nor Nicene, nor Constantinopolitan, nor of the undivided Church, nor Athanasian, nor anything, except it be Anglican—whatever that may mean,

for it has long since ceased to mean the faith of the English people.

Scores of writers, with much learning, eloquence, and goodness, have written volumes to prove—or rather to illustrate, as if it required no proof—that we have lost nothing of the Faith once delivered to the Saints, and have added nothing to it. Had they convinced or persuaded a people quite free to choose, their arguments would have had the weight of success. But Anglican theology has never quite trusted itself. It has always invoked, and always more or less enjoyed the powerful aid of civil institutions, and the resulting social advantages. As a simple fact it has always been, and it still is, a very great advantage to rising people to be on the orthodox side—that is, conforming members of the Church of England.

Well, States ought to have a conscience; they ought to lean to the right; they ought to make truth easier and pleasanter than error. But what can States possibly know about the eternal nature and the inner constitution of the Godhead? And what becomes of the alleged tradition of nineteen centuries when it has to lean on this broken reed of a State alliance?

CHAPTER CXXI.

THE COST OF ALL THIS.

NOW what is the price we are paying for all this, and have long been paying, and apparently shall long continue to pay? Again I seem to hear—Who

counts the cost of that which is inestimable? Who will not gladly suffer all things for the truth? I at least may ask the question, for I believe it not the truth, but a bauble, a toy, a child's puzzle, which I have to make the best of in the House of God, or when I join my fellow Church-people anywhere in common prayer. But I shall be told it is not this that makes the difference between the Church of England and Dissenters, of whatever sort they be. I answer that a difference as to the definition of the object of worship, and the substitution of an absolutely unintelligible form of words transcending the intelligence of philosophers and divines for the simple words and ideas of Scripture, may justly be regarded as the *fons et origo mali.*

The Church of England claims to be objective in its faith, and to regard Divine truth as a matter of more importance than religious emotions. Where a large class of Christians claim to have the truth in themselves, the Church of England points rather to a truth out of themselves. This, I suppose, is what Dissenters mean when they tell us that Churchmen carry their religion in their pockets—that is, in their prayer-books—and that our theologians are very learned on their shelves. These may be gibes; but when we set theological truth against even spiritual claims—alas! often against moral claims too, unless moral and spiritual be indeed the same thing—we should be the last to underrate the importance and the influence of an objective definition.

What then is the price we are paying for it? The cost of war is usually reckoned by thousands of lives

and by millions of pounds sterling. The Church of England's difference with Dissenters, putting Scotland and Ireland out of the question, costs it, in round numbers, ten million souls, 'lost' according to its own estimate, amounting in the course of successive generations and centuries to a total it is frightful to think of. Its pecuniary losses are a complex calculation, but the more they are considered the more they amount to. The Church may be said to lose all that the Dissenters raise for the building and maintenance of their chapels and schools, for the maintenance of their ministers and teachers, and for their noble and very successful missionary work all over the world. All this is incalculable, and I must not enlarge on it.

I will confine myself to one particular sacrifice, a culminating sacrifice, of a very representative character, and marking very distinctly the false position of the Church of England. For all this century it has taken the lead in the education of the poor, acquiring a decided advantage in most towns, and an absolute monopoly in most country villages. This has been done, first at the cost of a great expenditure; then at the far more serious cost of giving dogmatic instruction too large, indeed too exclusive, a place in the schools. The Church has sacrificed almost everything to make the poor children young theologians after its own pattern.

Pursuing this course for many years, leaving Dissenters no hope of compromise on any terms, it has finally driven them into an almost necessary alliance with those who are ready to separate secular from religious instruction, leaving the general community

to provide the one, and each religious community to see to the other. This alliance, which, whatever we may please to think of it, was inevitable under the circumstances, and is now history, produced the Public Elementary Education Act.

Immediately upon its passing, the Church of England, through its leading personages and special organs, proclaimed the policy of building and maintaining everywhere voluntary schools that should obviate the necessity of compulsory schools on the secular plan. The appeal thus made was to the loyalty of the clergy and their friends, and also to the pockets of ordinary laymen. The voluntary school on Church principles, it was supposed, would be much less burdensome than the board school, with its staff, and its 'red tape,' and its ambitious ideas.

But the appeal thus made was by the comparatively rich to the comparatively, indeed often absolutely, poor. Dignitaries, Conservative landowners, and men with good principles and good incomes, were urging on the poor country clergy to throw themselves into the gap, often to the entire sacrifice of all they had in the world. As the clergy were claiming the lion's share of the management, they had also to contribute the lion's share of the cost. There is no rule so universal in this country as that the man who has the whistle, and performs upon it, must pay for it. Individual landowners said very reasonably they were willing to pay their legal quota, or as much as others paid, but not to take the charge upon themselves. Thus it was with the building of schools, and when it came to their maintenance the ratepayers did

the same. They waited and waited long to see what others would do. The poor clergy, well in for it, stirred by a natural jealousy, and fired with a generous rivalry, built schools everywhere far in advance of their own means, and after all had generally to find that 'school boards,' freely drawing upon the rates, had better sites, finer buildings, more spacious playgrounds, higher subjects of instruction, and consequently, not seldom, a superior class of children.

The competition has seriously impoverished thousands of clergymen. It has disabled them from responding to many other demands. It has often made it impossible to afford money for the proper education of their own children, or even to add to their own sorry stock of standard and useful books. They have had to educate at their own cost the children of their poor; to see the Dissenters educating their poor at the cost of Church ratepayers, and applying the money thus saved to building chapels, and founding missions all over the world. We are doing Dissenters' work for them, and they, with a vengeance, are doing ours. While we are clutching a toy, they have the earth before them, and a people ready to follow.

Is it not a toy, I must ask, when it appears not to matter in what order the words are used? If the poor children, infants indeed, will only prattle about Three Persons and One God, backwards or forwards, upwards or downwards, without the slightest notion of the meaning, they are safe—yes, saved for all eternity. Yet what is this but a dreadful charm, as it may be, for good or for ill! I seldom hear even the Athanasian Creed read in church, without there

recurring to me several times the line in which Virgil imitated the action and drone of the old witches pronouncing some horrid incantation: *Miscueruntque herbas et non innoxia verba.* But the Athanasian formula is sense in comparison with the Anglican, which utterly defies interpretation.

I have yet to state the very amount, and the substantial form of the prize won at this incalculable cost. Our voluntary schools, after all, have to submit to inspection, and cannot be kept up without 'grants. They have, therefore, to comply with some stringent rules, of which I believe the general working is as follows. Each 'attendance' represents two hours of secular instruction. This is the entire school time in the afternoon. In the morning it is the last two hours out of three: the religious instruction has to be given in the first hour.

I have no reason to think my school at Plymtree an exception to the ordinary run of village schools, though the population perhaps was somewhat more scattered. For the whole of the first hour the children were dropping in very irregularly, many having had to walk two miles through muddy lanes, often under water. They had all to begin with saying home lessons—that is, something learnt at home. This would often last half an hour. But the roll-call, occupying ten minutes, had to be done within the remaining half-hour.

This left only twenty minutes, the only opportunity in the whole day, for religious instruction. It is true that as fast as the children had said their home lessons they fell back to their classes. There might

therefore, be some religious reading in the incomplete classes. But my recollection is that the children were generally poring over their home lessons till they had said them. Half an hour I believe to have been the outside of the religious instruction. Everything was done by the diocesan authorities to make the best of this half-hour. A 'syllabus' laid down the work of every child for every day of the six years of probable attendance. Each class had its subjects for the whole year; so the subjects had to be evenly distributed among the two hundred mornings of attendance. The tendency, indeed the avowed aim of the system, was to make the best use—that is, the most doctrinal use, in the orthodox sense—of this daily half-hour. There could be very little reading of Scripture, very little history or narrative, very little dwelling on chapters of special interest to babes in Christ as well as to their elders. Scripture in the mass was too cumbrous for the occasion. Time only allowed of 'texts' and doctrinal statements.

Now to me it is something awful to hear a schoolmaster explaining the doctrine of the Trinity. A dean, one of the celebrities of the day, says that he has never yet met a theological work by a layman that was worth reading. I tremble to think what he would say if he had heard what I have heard. Yet there is a very prevalent idea, in high quarters too, that a clergyman had better leave his school quite in the hands of the schoolmaster, who knows his business best. His business is to satisfy the inspector—the diocesan inspector in this matter; and he, of course, is much bound by the syllabus.

As religious instruction under the circumstances cannot be given in large doses, or in what may be called the regular diet of the school, it must be given in a concentrated form, in drugs that, as they say, kill or cure. I must say that, as far as I can hear, the treatment does frequently kill, at least if secession from the Church is at all equivalent to spiritual death.

A Devonshire clergyman, not of my own neighbourhood, but whose schools had a good reputation, told me that he carried out most conscientiously the requirements of the syllabus, and used the books recommended, but that the result was his schools were only a preparation of the Meeting House over the way, for that all his children when they became young men and women joined the Dissenters.

I am not at all sure that this was not the highest possible testimony to the honesty and earnestness of this gentleman's teaching. He made the children feel that their souls were worth saving, and salvation worth the trouble of inquiry, at least. He set them on the discovery of that which would satisfy their spiritual cravings, instead of racking their poor brains.

As to the actual results of the present practice of religious instruction under these difficult conditions, I am sure the present generation shows a great falling off in Scriptural knowledge compared with the last. Large portions of the Bible are slipping out of knowledge. We are threatened with a return of the Dark Ages in this respect. Our Secularists of course have their own gospels to preach, much better, and more manly, as they believe, than the nursery tale from the

shores of Galilee. Our Church-people are following their lead. By the substitution of dogma for Holy Writ, they are hiding the Word of God as much as the Jewish and Roman Priesthood ever did.

The loss is double. The Bible is both a sacred and a secular book. It contains all the poetry, all the history, all the geography, all the politics, all the general information, all the knowledge of the East, that can ordinarily be forced into the minds of our poor children. When they have lost the Bible, they have lost all. In place of it, and as a sufficient consolation for the loss, they are to be made exact theologians; and they are to find, first of all, in the Apostles' Creed, what nobody ever did, or could find in it, what is not to be found in the Bible, and what is either very untrue, or very absurd.

CHAPTER CXXII.

MYSTERIES.

THE Church of England has now for centuries prided itself on the possession of a mystery, which it has made the chief claim to obedience, and the chief test of saving faith. The Evangelicals, like their predecessors the Puritans, have done much the same by another mystery. The former is the Anglican dogma of the Trinity; the latter pertains to each person's hold on the work of redemption. I have no wish to cling to any definition of the latter that I may have

ventured to offer, and I should be ready to accept any definition presented on good authority. Whatever I may think of the latter, and its spiritual dangers, I can see no reason at all in the former.

When the bond of union is a mystery, it is very important to know what mysteries are. What are true mysteries, and allowable mysteries? What mysteries are recognised in the Bible, and what does the word there mean? The word occurs about five-and-twenty times in the New Testament, and in every instance it means something within the reach of the understanding, though hidden for a time, or known only to those who inquire, and whose eyes have not been judicially blinded.

The great truths of Revelation are mysterious, but so far from their being beyond the reach of the understanding, all the world, in all ages, has had ideas of the same order in the same matter, and apparently could not help having them. The nature and operations of God pass our understanding; but the idea of God, as well as the belief in Deity, is universal and irresistible. The Incarnation is a mystery; but all nations have had their sons of the gods, and demigods; and all nations have believed in the occasional appearance of the Deity, or of Divinities, in bodily form. Idols, false as they are, everywhere testify to the true Image of God. The Holy Spirit and His operations are a mystery; but in all ages people have believed in Divine inspirations given in multifarious ways to rulers, priests, soothsayers, pythonesses, poets, orators, bacchanals, and even birds and beasts.

In the whole circle of Primitive dogma, there is

nothing that had not been familiar to the whole human race. Upon this undeniable fact were founded the most telling attacks of unbelievers and sceptics in the last century. It is the argument of Conyers Middleton, who meant much more than he had the courage to say.

The admission of the Gentiles into the Covenant of Grace was a mystery, till it was revealed; but it never was unintelligible, whether believed or not. Wherever St. Paul divulged this mystery, the Jews knew what he meant, and sought to destroy him. Nature is a mystery, full of mysteries; but nobody would venture to say, certainly in this century, that it repels intelligence, and does not submit to reason. Its laws are plainer and plainer, the further they are traced. Every human being, heart, mind, and body, is a mystery, understood by some more than others, and certainly a very proper subject for rational investigation.

There is no authority, no example, of a mystery the virtue of which is that, as far as it can be penetrated, apprehended, and tested by reason, it is contrary to reason. Infinity is not contrary to reason, though beyond it. Eternity is not contrary to reason, though beyond it. An existence without a beginning is not contrary to reason, but beyond it. That Three are One and One Three is contrary to reason, though not beyond its province. Theologians, indeed, tell us that numeration may be a different process out of this mundane system than in it—indeed, that in Heaven there may be no numbers at all. But if it be allowable and pious to doubt whether there be Three in

Heaven, what ground is left for our worshipping God as Triune? Certainly we are not justified in conceiving of Heaven after the pattern of earthly things. The Bible gives us nothing in that matter but parables and visions. It promises us a triumph of righteousness and a reign of love, but there it leaves us. It tells us that the love of God passes understanding. This can only mean that it exceeds our finite perceptions in its depth, its intensity, and its manifold operations. It cannot mean that we don't know what love is, for the love which Christians feel now is always spoken of as an earnest of that which shall be for ever. A change there must be; but that which is best in our natures will remain the same, though purified, developed, and brought into closer relations with the objects of faith, now seen dimly and afar off.

The Apostles, Evangelists, and other first teachers, had mysteries, which they valued above all earthly things; but these were mysteries which they laboured to impart, and for which they wanted not a philosophical intellect, or a craving for transcendentalism, but simply the good soil of a true and loving disposition. There is not a word in the New Testament to favour the idea that they went about with an unfathomable, inscrutable, and utterly unintelligible secret, playing upon numerical combinations and philosophical ideas.

When our Lord thanked His heavenly Father for revealing these things to babes and hiding them from the wise and prudent, these things could not have been an impossible problem.

That some think they have answered it, is nothing in its favour, when one sees the rarity, the

precariousness, the uncertainty of their self-content. Till recently I had believed that the famous author of the 'Defence of the Nicene Creed' might be trusted, if any man, for a true account of the doctrine of the Trinity. I now read that he was seriously mistaken about it; and, sooth to say, being directly concerned for the Nicene Creed, he seems to me to hold but loosely to the terms of the Athanasian.

But what is the inevitable consequence of people going about and acting a public part of the highest consequence, such as the Ministerial office, with a portentous, incommunicable, insoluble paradox ever in their minds, and ever obtruding itself between them and all they come near. Many will not receive it. None can really. We know how easily the possession of a secret may break up mutual confidence and good fellowship. This secret, though only a trick of words, is invested with infinite import. Its prodigious power is that it is the Shibboleth of the Anglican Church. It appeals to our loyalty. That is a sentiment which hardly knows of a more or less in the measure of value. With it the symbol is quite as much as that which is symbolised.

In all conscience there are difficulties enough in the way of Christian intercommunion. How often must good people have felt a momentary tremor as they recited the words 'the Communion of Saints,' and felt how little there was of it. Above all other obstacles comes this inexplicable knot, this immovable mass, made, it might seem, for the very purpose of blighting sympathy and blocking up the very approaches to a reasonable union.

It has sometimes suggested itself to me that the Anglican dogma of the Trinity accommodates itself more easily to what is called philosophy than the words of Scripture; and that this may be the secret of its acceptableness to 'the powers that be.' Upon the simplest notion of a God, as an omnipresent and omnipotent Deity, He is in all things, and all things are in Him. He is in saint and in sinner, in Christian and in heathen, in the whole living or dead creation, and they are all in Him. He is in Hell, and it is in Him, for it is comprehensible and He is not. Revelation deals with these matters in their personal and moral aspects. It is not bound by ideas of space and time. Material science is bound. It tends to pantheism, and it readily accepts that God is everything and everything is God.

Learned and saintly men, holding the Anglican dogma, and bound to its terms, have dealt with it reverentially. But I feel that the most reverential treatment is apt to give a needless shock. I will not quote the well-known passage in a great living preacher which will occur to some of my readers. But I must suppose that the preacher intended to intensify devotion, rather than to stagger faith. I must quote something, however, to illustrate my meaning. Take the following passage in Herbert's 'Country Parson,' chap. xiv.:—'Wherefore neither disdaineth he to enter into the poorest cottage, though he even creep into it, and though it smell never so loathsomely. For both God is there, and those for whom God died.'

No doubt this is in harmony with the Anglican dogma, at least with one of the two alternative senses

of the dogma. It may, too, be alleged that the Anglican dogma can be inferred from the Athanasian. Even if it may be inferred, the Athanasian Creed, audacious as it is, does not itself make that inference. It does not say that God is His own Son. It does not say that God is His Spirit. It does not say that God died for us. But when creeds halt or stumble, philosophy comes in to their rescue and makes them less repugnant because no longer with moral significance. Envelop the whole matter in a material unity, and universal reaction. Say that everything is God, and God is everything. Who can deny it? Who can fear it? Who can care for it? What matters it? Let that be our creed. All can agree upon it. All can do what they like with it, shelve it, forget it, or coin it into a convenient currency.

I suppose this must be a question of relation, as well as of nature, substance, essence, or whatever name be given to that which can only be said of God. What then is the question? It is this: What is the relation of the Son to the Father, and of the Father to the Son? But of course this does not mean only the relations of the Incarnate Son of God—Jesus Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Mary, the Crucified Lord—to His Father. These are ideas that come within our comprehension. So far as the human nature is comprehended in the Divine nature, we may say that we comprehend the Son of God.

The question refers not to that which is comprehensible, but to that which is incomprehensive, the Divine nature of the Son of God. It refers to that which He was in the beginning, before the heavens or

the earth were made. What was He, what is He, in the bosom of the Eternal Father? It is in the region of the incomprehensible. It is beyond the reach of human intelligence. We can only accept what we are told, and we must accept it in that sense which is common to the comprehensible and the incomprehensible—that is, the moral sense. There is a mystery, for God is a mystery; but it is not forced upon us as a mystery to be solved, as a riddle to be answered, but as an awful truth to bow before.

Christ came from the Father, and He returned to the Father. He is at the right hand of the Father. The Father has given to Him all earthly power, and made Him Lord of all. He is in His Father, and His Father is in Him. He and His Father are one. His true disciples are one; in the Son and in the Father. Christ is in them, and they in Him. They are members of His body of which He is the head. These are all plain and intelligible expressions, even though we must feel that owing to the imperfection of our nature we cannot see the whole of their meaning.

But is it possible, is it proposed to us, is it made incumbent on us, to ascertain for ourselves, or to take on any earthly authority, an accurate, scientific, or mathematical definition of this eternal relation, included, as theologians put it, within the substance of the Godhead?

For myself I recoil, and always have recoiled, from such investigations. I cannot scale the walls of Heaven, and peep through chinks of my own finding or my own making into that which passes human

understanding. We are abundantly told what we ought to feel and to do, and we have that knowledge which should move our hearts and quicken all our powers; but our knowledge must be now in part, and it does not include the eternal constitution of the Deity, if, for lack of words, we may so describe an unfathomable mystery.

CHAPTER CXXIII.

SOMETHING TO SAY.

WHEN any question is raised or any misgiving confessed as to the dogmatic position of the Anglican Church, one reply is sure to present itself: 'We must teach something.' I have seen this put thus simply and nakedly as a sufficient defence of the Athanasian Creed. But it is most frequently advanced to meet any suggestion for Christian fellowship with those not of our communion. It is not enough, we are told over and over again, to carry the Bible in our hands, and direct our hearers or our scholars to look into the book themselves and find out what it means. Anybody can do that; but we have a special relation to the Bible: we are its possessors, custodians, and interpreters. As a fact, too, nobody goes about with a Bible without claiming to interpret it. No volume, no study, is necessarily so associated with living agencies.

Nor can it be said that the Church of England is

generally oppressive in its requirements. It is not very exacting as to attendance on its daily or weekly services; as to confessions, absolutions, and communions; as to feasts, fasts, and holidays; as to mortification, restitution, and satisfaction to God or to man, or as to entire submission of the reason to the faith upon history or miracle. In all these matters, it may almost be said, we have nothing to say. An Australian Father at the Vatican Council observed to me that the clergy of the English Church out in his part of the world made no way because they had nothing to say to their people. There were no results because nothing passed between them. Nothing was said or done. From another quarter, in entire accord with the Church of England, I have heard that the settlers in outlying stations are scandalised and even grieved when a clergyman comes and goes without having said or done anything that a clergyman may be thought intended for. Not only are the visits few and far between, but when the angels do come they have no message to deliver.

Of course this ought not to be. George Herbert describes the Sunday as the parson's market-day when he does most of his business. He finds his customers at home, or at least off their work. He finds them both disengaged and sobered, and under a sense of duty to listen to what he has to say to them. No doubt a pastor ought always to have something to say, for he has to do with his tongue better work than his poor flock can ever do with their hands.

But it is not enough to say just something—that is, anything. The necessity of saying or doing some-

thing has been in all ages and in all matters a prolific source of mischief to the world. Grant that we must say something, it is not the less necessary, nay, it is even the more necessary, that it should be something true, and a saving truth too. The necessity of saying something cannot possibly be a just defence of error or folly. Nothing can justify that.

Like other people entering the great market of the nation or of the world, we must come with something in our hands or on our tongue. But we must be honest men, and good men, not impostors, not dealers in fictitious, or adulterated, or deleterious articles. The clergy, especially, receive a good deal, and have to return a more than equivalent. They are the privileged bearers of peace and goodwill. Does the actual contribution fulfil this promise? Are they inviting and winning souls to a Divine communion and fellowship, or throwing obstacles in the way on the pretence of justifying their own position?

So when we are challenged, as we often are, as to the necessity of the obstacles we seem to interpose in the way of Christian intercommunion, the first question is whether these obstacles be of Divine authority or of human invention. Comprehensively, and in view of many different controversies all around us, the question is whether the Church of England has ever thoroughly surveyed the grounds it stands upon. Has it ever fully and exhaustively compared with Scripture all the matter which it declares to be only worthy of reception so far as it can be proved from Scripture? It has had to consider its position at certain crises, more of a political than of a religious

character, after the Reformation, after the Rebellion, after the Revolution of 1688, and a generation later. But at no time can it be said to have made an inquiry to satisfy theologians, scholars, or ordinary well-informed Christians.

Such an inquiry once begun with any degree of authority, and in view of probable modifications, can only end, some Church-people tell us, in the destruction of faith. The creeds they regard as so mutually dependent, that one single article restated, or even retranslated, and the whole series is jeopardised.

That none can answer for the outcome of an inquiry is true enough, but they who, in the name of faith, warn us against touching the creeds, may be referred to Scripture for a truer estimate of that which they are contending for. Faith is there illustrated and exemplified in a striking variety of forms, of characters, of circumstances, and of previous anticipation. It was enough to believe in Jesus Christ as the promised Saviour, Teacher, and Master. Whether in Gospel or in Epistle, there is theology for the Jew; miracle and exhortation for the many. We shall not indeed return to those days, but He that fed His flock then will feed them now, and will find ways of His own. Nor can we close our eyes to the fact that all around us are good Christians walking by faith, who have never recited the creeds, and are not even accurately acquainted with them.

The faith once delivered to the saints has emerged from many storms and controversies. The Reformation was a universal upheaving of religious systems, institutions, and traditions. Not to speak of

other churches, the Anglican Church rose out of it. The Revolution of 1793 abolished the Gallican Church, which survives and flourishes. The craven fear of incidental consequences has not saved the Anglican Church from losing nearly half England, not to speak of Ireland and Scotland. If there be danger in granting inquiry, there is not less danger in refusing it. Such an inquiry must be a long one. I cannot hope—I can hardly say I wish—to see it even begun. I shall certainly not live to see the end of it. But it is my deep conviction that it has to be made, and that in no trifling or dissembling mood.

CHAPTER CXXIV.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND DOUBLE-TONGUED.

To the great body of Dissenters the present bearing of the Church of England is insincere, double-minded, double-tongued, and hypocritical. With one hand we offer neighbourly kindness, with the other we ward off and threaten. With one breath we greet, with the next we consign to outer darkness. If it were always and uniformly the same persons or the same functionaries that thus alternately advanced and receded, it might be regarded in the venial light of a spiritu harlequinade. The seeming kindness and the seei ing hostility would balance one another, and t result would be no more than folly.

But the Church of England is doing all the

contradictory acts, and expressing these contradictory sentiments, through different agencies at the same time. On the platforms of several great societies, in works of philanthropy, in missionary operations, in literary and scientific reunions, and in the public life of the metropolis, the Church of England, as represented by many of her leading men, mingles on terms of social confidence and friendly intimacy with those who make private judgment, or even 'thought,' their only guide.

It can be more than tolerant, more than latitudinarian, for it can even seem indifferent. In the haunts of fashion, and at the ever-flowing source of sweet or powerful influences and of grand affairs, it can deal wisely and tenderly with the human conscience. It has to operate on the world, and for that purpose to take the world as it is, and be all things to all men. The world and they that claim civil and religious liberty are too many, too united, and too strong for open assault, and the Church has to win them, if possible, by guile, with some abatement of her loftier pretensions.

But bigotry of one sort or another is the law and rule of life in some thousand villages, and small towns as quiet as villages and as remote from the great scene of action. In those humble regions the clergyman enjoys the much-coveted rights and duties of a spiritual autocrat; which, in his case, means that everybody may do what he pleases, except only himself. He is posted there, tied to a stake, bound to close terms of residence, under the piercing eye of popular inspection, without aids, with-

out abettors, without counsellors, to fight a continual and unflinching battle for an immaculate Church.

He may see from his window the best people in his parish, and the most interesting members of his congregation, pass freely and light-heartedly to the Sunday solemnities of the chapel—some half-dozen chapels may be—or to the more festive assemblages held there on week-days. He may envy them, but the law by which he is bound forbids him to join them. It is his first duty to make no compromise with Dissent, and to keep it at arm's length. If he ever exchanges a word with the minister or local preacher, it must be with guarded condescension. He can have no real fellowship with darkness. If he wishes to save himself trouble he may simply avoid recognising that there is Dissent, or that there are Dissenters in his parish. There is much power in shutting one's eyes to facts, so long as they allow you to do so.

Few clergymen can be found quite satisfied with a course which must fail to satisfy others, or to meet the demands of the occasion. To my own feelings nothing has ever been more painful than to receive tithe rent-charge, punctually paid to the hour and to the uttermost farthing, from men whose religious views have prevented them from accepting my ministry.

These differences and these antagonisms are not confined to those who have consummated their dissent by forming or entering separate communities. They are sure to extend in some degree to those who still count as Church-people. Even were it

only for those that remain in the Church, the village clergyman is obliged, or at least irresistibly tempted, to break out into polemics now and then. He must stand up for the Church and its distinctive doctrines. He must say that it is right, and the opponents, or seceders, wrong. He must be orthodox; and it would ill befit one of his class, or in a village church, to reopen the question what orthodoxy is, and what the truth is, and who are they that shall be saved according to the strict letter of Divine, or ecclesiastical law. He is necessarily a champion. He may not be a David, but he may easily find himself in the presence of a village Goliath. He is advised to maintain a wise and peaceful bearing; but who is there that does not fight for his own—his own possession, his own children, his own post, his own, perhaps his only hold upon the consideration of the world? Under these circumstances people fight with difficulty, often without success: but they die hard.

Will any candid and reasonable being just compare these two styles of action, respectively suggested, and indeed forced by circumstances upon the village parson, and the dignified and fashionable ecclesiastic airing alternately his orthodoxy and his liberality at salons, platforms, and boards of societies? Yet the Church of England speaks through both voices. It is she who denounces, stigmatises, sternly reprobates, solemnly warns, and all the rest of it, in village churches and thatched cottages, and, a bare hundred miles off, makes everything pleasant for people who tell her that they cannot understand her, or that they don't believe a word she has to say to them.

May not the poor villagers shudder to hear how pleasantly things are managed in the metropolis and great cities? May not the freer denizens of those gay circles be justly indignant when they hear of the bigotry, the tyranny, still kept up over such humble souls as will bear it? I may point out this duplicity of conduct even when I can do little to mend it. They that have suffered may speak. It is plain there are dogmatisms that we hold to be indispensable in one place, dispensable in another; indispensable among our poor rural folk, quite dispensable in clubs, drawing-rooms, public meetings, and where rival missions have to contend for colonists and savages all over the world.

The rural clergy have no choice in the matter. They have nothing to do with tactics, broad policies, or magnificent surrenders. They are sentries fixed on a spot, with movable assailants hovering all about them. They have to challenge any one who approaches too near or takes a threatening attitude. If they don't receive the password they are bound to the last resource. They are indeed to be much pitied, and their position is growing daily more intolerable. My own belief is that if practically, and individually, the country clergy were permitted to move in the broad lines taken freely by those who are higher in position, more in the centre, and more in the world, they would be able to do much more in the cause of Christ, and against secularity.

I am very sure that a better understanding, more mutual confidence, more freedom of intercourse, and more religious communion with Dissenters would

have obtained much better terms for the cause of Christ, and for the Bible, in our elementary schools, than exist under the recent legislation. An excessive jealousy has proved its own tormentor and executioner. The Church has almost ruined itself as to its finances—that may be said literally of thousands of Churchmen—in the attempt to secure the monopoly of religious instruction; and it has gained nothing—nothing but 'a bad quarter of an hour.'

Can it even be said that all is lost but honour? I cannot think there is even that reserve; for the Church is more pushed into a corner than ever it was, and I fear is less than ever able to state what the thing is for which the sacrifice has been made. As I have said, I am not in a position to suggest remedies. But the rank and file have some right to know what they are risking everything for. They have a right to expect unambiguous language and bearing from those who are over their heads.

Above I have stated the very serious variation upon the Athanasian Creed adopted by the Church of England into its Catechism, its Litany, and its Marriage Service. As that is the dogma with which schools are most concerned—for it is made the essence and foundation of the Christian Faith—I need not go further back. Will the Church of England through its accredited organs answer distinctly whether or not it be eternal damnation to prefer the Bible to the Church Catechism?

But while I seem to accuse the Church of England, and to challenge its foremost men to an unfair, because gratuitous test, I cannot but confess that we

are all, every soul of us—myself I can certainly speak for—double-minded in this matter. It must be the duty of a clergyman in charge of souls to ascertain whether his flock have right notions upon matters pertaining to salvation. It must be his duty also to stir up and invigorate the faith of his clerical brethren. On this dogma alone I may say I have generally found, I have generally preserved, a dead silence.

Unless I except some rather angry discussions with an old lady, a survivor of a lapsed Presbyterian congregation at Buckland, I cannot remember that I ever sounded a parishioner as to his understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity. I feel sure that I should at any time have feared to hear something so shocking as to confound me, and even paralyse me; or something too absurd for argument, too ludicrous to be followed up.

As for poor children, it is with them an act of memory and no more. With regard to their elders, it would be something awful to find them staggering about, as it were, like drunken men, before the throne of the Almighty.

Every year's experience and every page, whether of ancient or of modern authors, that I read on this subject, recalls the line written in the heat of the last Trinitarian controversy, 'And fools rush in where angels fear to tread.' In this matter 'all have come short.' Yet I do not think the present or the last century more rash, more irreverent, or more non-Christian than any one century before—omitting, of course, the Apostolic age, of which indeed we know so little.

CHAPTER CXXV.

HER ABANDONMENT OF HER WORK.

FOR the greater part of my life I have frequently thought over a great and distressing fact, which seemed to me quite unaccountable, and the worst of all scandals to the cause of Christ in this country. Our Blessed Lord's ministry and discourses all denote that the Kingdom of Heaven means the improvement, the elevation, the purification, the emancipation of mankind. Philanthropists, whatever their theology, equally appeal to the four Gospels. Communists and Socialists claim the Bible in senses of their own. Humanity quotes texts. So too does every cause that asserts the rights of man, that professes to mitigate sufferings or to heal maladies. The only fear has been lest so easy and obvious an appeal should be overdone, and lest the sensitive and impulsive should accept too literally the texts that appeal to common sympathy.

On the face of Scripture it has on its own side all who endeavour to alleviate the physical sufferings of man; to multiply and cheapen wholesome food; to make nations contribute to one another's prosperity; to promote peace, mutual confidence, and fairness between man and man, between classes and classes; to make our cities sweeter, healthier, and pleasanter; to break the prison bonds, and put an end to legal massacre; to put our dead well beyond the reach of our senses; to cure as far as possible diseases of all

kinds, blindness, deafness, and mental maladies; to diffuse useful knowledge; and, above all, to give encouragement and opportunity to all who have something to do or to say in the name of Christ.

I am not at all overstating what must be the result of the rudest analysis of the sacred writings. If this is not their moral significance, I may ask, what is? Now this enumeration does but imperfectly indicate the leading social operations of this century. At no former age have there been so many great works carried on by immense numbers of people newly organised for the purpose, and feeling a sort of spiritual unity.

The Church of England had a divine commission and charter for all these works, and might have been foremost in them. It might have pointed to the British empire, as Augustus to his marble city, and said what she had found, and what she had left—except that she does not leave. In this great and combined movement for good the Church has not been in the front; she has not tried to take the lead; she has, generally speaking, taken the contrary part, by obstructing, depreciating, and minimising the good work undertaken by others. Her plan lay in other lines. She sought to strengthen herself by alliance with powerful interests, not by a hold on the affections of the people, not by doing His will on earth as it is done in heaven.

It was by necessity that the common rank of the clergy and their lay friends had to confine themselves to local spheres and narrow lines. The philanthropical movements that began with this century for the education of all classes, for the diffusion of useful

knowledge, for emancipation and reform, for colonisation, emigration, and even missions to the heathen, had been chiefly promoted by Liberals and Dissenters. These had the lead, and they used the lead to have the choice of the methods and ways.

Looking back to the earlier period of my conscious and rational existence, I must say that I do not think there has been any age in the world in which humanity, justice, and common sense were more subordinated to established interests, and more trodden underfoot by them. Yet this was under the wealthiest and, in many respects, the most powerful ecclesiastical establishment which the great revolutionary movement had left to the world.

How was this? How could that which was founded for good be so evil? How could Heaven itself be so misrepresented on the stage of human affairs? I do believe that no small part of this terrible default and abandonment of duty is owing to the Church appearing, not as the representative of Him who was cradled in a manger, who spake from the mount as no man spake, who went about doing good, who healed, taught, comforted, prayed, and died on the cross, but as the monopolist of an inscrutable and terrible mystery, giving the keys of heaven and of hell, and conferring upon the holders the right of all human power. Armed with a dreadful spell of words absolutely defying intelligence, and placing theology beyond all intellectual or moral test, the Church of England cared not for those things that simple Christians were troubling themselves about. She proposed a riddle none could solve. She held a talisman none could resist.

Gibberish as it might seem, it was the 'Open Sesame!' to place, and power, and preferment, and position, upon earth. For was it not the secret clue to Heaven?

Of course I may be told that all truth can be held in ungodliness, indeed always has been so held. It is true that whatever betters a man at all, whatever raises him in self-estimation or in public esteem, in intellectual power or in command of circumstances, has its concomitant dangers. He is sure to look for some worldly or material gain, as well as the spiritual, and he is pretty sure to find it.

In the lowest orders of animal life we are told of certain creatures that always bear twins, not alike, but as different as can be. The one is normal, like the parent, active, performing some beneficial office, and destined to perpetuate the breed; the other is abnormal, monstrous, useless, destructive, shortlived, and ending with itself, insomuch that the wonder is why it should ever have been born.

It is much the same with every dogma, every philosophy, every political maxim. Its direct intention and legitimate office is to promote truth, goodness, and happiness. But it can hardly do these things without bringing friends, consideration, dignity, rank, wealth, and power. These are temptations, all the more dangerous because they are as implicated in the fruits of goodness as the fatal asp in the basket brought to the unhappy queen. They seem the gifts of Heaven, and not to be rejected or despised. In due time, nay very soon, they take the foremost place, for they are most easily realised.

Whether in any so-called church, or so-called de-

nomination, or so-called system of philosophy or of politics, it is the same. You are to rise. You are to find yourselves in a select circle, perhaps the centre of it. The world is to lay all it has to offer at the feet of a new, or at least exclusive, revelation. In respect of this the common people are accursed. Truth is to justify itself first in the glory of its holders and privileged promoters; next, as it may happen. After your own lawful share of the spoil has been secured, the rest of the world may take their chance.

The Apostles had heard the promise that they should sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. It had chimed in with their expectations, and there had evidently been some impatience for its fulfilment with a strong hand. Of the whole number, five contributed to the Scripture books very unlike in some respects, but very like in the entire absence of self-exaltation, one early won the crown of martyrdom, and the rest may almost be said to disappear from the sacred narrative.

They were too overwhelmed by what they had seen to think of themselves; too sensible of a true glory to covet fictitious imitation. The facts they had witnessed were so stupendous that they had no occasion or wish to work them into a theory, or build a philosophy upon them. They did not present themselves to the world as leaders of thought. They did not contend for the honour of the subtlest distinction, or the deepest insight into unfathomable mysteries. If any one says that St. John the Divine did, I cannot see it myself. His statements are simple, few, and clear, and involve no intellectual

difficulties. He does not affect to tell everything, or make everything clear. He says just enough.

The Church of England has always claimed to be especially Primitive. It may be called one of her titles. But no one has so much as attempted a comparison proving a marked resemblance between the Church of the first century and the English Church of the nineteenth. With what early century does our Church claim likeness and kinship? In the first three centuries there is hardly a resting-place: so rapid the fluctuations, so great the turmoil. We must come lower down. Perhaps we shall find our nearest likeness when the Church of Christ became the Church of the Empire.

So from the first century turn to the fourth; from the Apostles to the Nicene Fathers. What do we see there? Talk of the Dark Ages—talk of the triumph of Barbarism over Rome, talk of the Ten Persecutions, talk of the terrible conflicts for supreme power which led a wearied world to accept Augustus, and Christ. All these horrors put together hardly exceed the violence of the century which saw the Church installed in the seat of empire, and its bishops engaged in an incessant struggle for victory on questions beyond all human ken.

Ten thousand altars had been overthrown, and the systems of philosophy were melting into one indiscriminate haze. The new dogma offered a path of inquiry, a field of enterprise, and now the only road to promotion. Hundreds emerged one after another, to announce to the world that they saw deeper into the Godhead, and farther back into past

eternity, than those already in the chairs of authority. As each form of the dogma won a temporary triumph, the discomfited theologians retired, like Virgil's beaten lord of the herd, to sharpen their weapons, and then reappear with more pointed and dexterous logomachy. That much was then overruled for good, I cannot doubt, but at no period was the omnipotence of God shewn in such contrast to the folly of man. That Christianity survived is a marvel of grace.

If this be not a true account of the fourth century, why cannot its story be made popular, or at least interesting: why cannot it be put into the hands of children? Why must it be an ordinary thing for a youth to know nothing whatever of the Fathers, till he finds their names in some of the forty works he is recommended to study in the six months before his examination for Deacon's orders?

I remember Pusey being very anxious to give our poor clerical striplings a little more time—a year out of the academical course; but he would not have allowed the poor sheep to wander about in that thorny wilderness, leaving their wool on every thicket. He would lead them by ways of his own, so that they should not even know what they had gone through.

Our own relation to the creeds and our use of them are very different from those of other Churches. We accept them mainly, the Roman Catholics absolutely, as the decision of General Councils. Our custom is for the entire congregation to recite them in the vernacular, standing, as an act of worship. In several Sunday services, every year, we recite the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene, the Athanasian, the creed

of the Litany, the respective creeds of the shorter and the longer benediction, the *Gloria Patri*, the *Te Deum*, which is a creed, and several other distinct creeds, particularly some introduced into the collects, with the frequent addition of modern hymns designed to inculcate one form or other of the Trinitarian dogma. On the one hand, Roman Catholics recite the creeds in Latin, reserving the Athanasian for the clergy. On the other hand, our Nonconformists do not use them at all. Anglicans believe, or assume, that the creeds can be proved from Holy Writ; Roman Catholics generally, and certainly the chief authorities in this island, tell us they cannot be proved from Holy Writ, and that they are neither to be proved nor understood except by a special gift communicated to members of the true Church. Such an opinion, carried out, as it is in practice, supersedes all reference to the history, the characters, and the arguments of the fourth century. It disposes of difficulties that English divines spend a life over to very little purpose, while they are endeavouring to enter into a philosophy and a scholarship very different from those of our age.

CHAPTER CXXVI.

THE ORTHODOX DISSENTERS.

I SHALL be reminded that our English Dissenters are generally as dogmatic as the Church of England upon what is called the fundamental question. The

great majority of Dissenters are 'orthodox' on that point. It is even said that in their theological colleges they compel a greater amount of study upon it, and that a Nonconformist Trinitarian is generally better able to defend his faith than an ordinary clergyman fresh from an English university. It may be so; but the fact has to be ascertained, and taken for what it is worth.

In truth the Athanasian doctrine does not occupy at all a prominent place in the pulpit utterances, in the private ministrations, or in the tracts and devotional works of any Dissenting community that I have been brought in contact with. What orthodox Dissenters actually teach and preach is the character and work of 'Jesus Christ'; His compassion on our fallen state; His leaving the glory which He had with the Father; His descending to our rank and sharing our nature with its miseries and infirmities, sin only excepted; His life of labour and love; His fulfilling the law for us; His death for us; His rising for us; His perpetual intercession for us with the Father; His presence still amongst us at the door of every heart that has once known His name and power, and His final return in glory to judge the world and reward His true disciples.

All this, and much more, may be preached and taught, and is preached and taught, without entering upon such questions as the nature of the Godhead, or the co-equal Divinity of the Son of God, or the Personality of the Holy Spirit. Dissenters have generally much more command of Scripture than Churchmen have. They can quote many more texts: and so long as they are quoting texts they leave these awful

theological difficulties where they find them. But it is the habit of clergymen, certainly of English clergymen, to extract what they are pleased to consider the essence of Scripture, and discard the husk and woody fibre, the chaff and straw.

The Bible is a very bulky volume. Even the New Testament contains much that may be called repetition. It offers many difficulties to those who are on the look-out for them. Many of its statements are simple enough taken separately, but not at once reconcilable. Not only the history, but the doctrine too has to be harmonised. So professional preachers and expositors are driven to royal roads. They exhibit a theological scheme, as little recalling the Bible itself as the framework of a roof does the forest it comes from.

The 'Voluntaries' cannot do this—not at least so easily, for they would soon lose their congregations, which expect to have the Bible, not merely something professing to be distilled from it. So the Athanasian dogma, if indeed they really hold it, is laid on the shelf. It is in the minister's scanty collection of books, and in his notes and analyses, if he has kept them; not on his tongue. I suppose there is some difference amongst the Dissenters, for the Wesleyans have the credit of being rather ambitiously and pretentiously orthodox, and they are twitted by the other sects as an imitative Church of England. If this be so, then there is more or less stickling for orthodoxy among the Dissenters. As the Independents and Congregationalists disclaim all authority except the voice of the Spirit in each separate Church,

they cannot be strictly bound by the 'Catholic Faith;' and, indeed, they are not.

I have been repeatedly told by serious Dissenters of different kinds that they do not like creeds in the education of children. In this they all showed an amazing and overpowering unanimity fifteen years since, when Parliament rather suddenly made up its mind to settle the question of public elementary education. Rather than have creeds, or dogmatic instruction, such as it was likely to be, the Dissenters with one accord excluded the Bible from the time-table—indeed, the Bible as a whole from the rate-paid school altogether.

Nevertheless, most Dissenters tell us that they hold really and substantially what we do; and when the dogmatic question is formally stated, they stand by our side. All the Churches in the world have one inducement to supposed orthodoxy over and above an honest zeal for the truth. The real struggle is for power. Whether it be a continent or a village, the question is the same: Who is to be Cæsar there? In such a question everything else may be dealt lightly with—the gifts and graces of the Spirit, the consistent walk and life, the example and law of Jesus Christ, knowledge of the Scriptures—indeed, everything that makes a Christian. One thing must not be so dealt with. It must be reduced to a handy form, and to a compass so small as to allow of its being hidden and produced as the occasion may require. This is orthodoxy, or what will pass for such in the currency of the surrounding world.

The fortunate possessor of the palladium may con-

fidently believe and proclaim himself as good as anybody else. He may renounce the idea of unity, and all the virtues that tend to it, and are indeed necessary to it. The cause of truth, as he is pleased to esteem it, sanctions in his eyes almost any number of the lesser offences against common charity. 'Ours is the truth, and the only truth,' is heard on every side. If anybody venture to ask if this be the Gospel and the way to spread it, there is always the reference to the great Churches that claim above all others the titles of Catholicism and Orthodoxy. The children are only doing what their fathers did before them. This may be an excuse, but it is no justification. If we only do what our fathers did we must not take it hard that we pay the penalty of their sins, whatever we may think ourselves.

CHAPTER CXXVII.

IN NECESSARIIS UNITAS.

I AM pleading for unity, and for comprehension within the limits of justice and truth. As a Christian minister now for half a century, I have earnestly desired it, and done my best for it. As to what I have done in any other capacity, it might require some analysis of character and of modes of expression to put that correctly. Whether in Church or in State I have always gone on the theory of government for all, and with the consent of all; and I have ever held

a government self-convicted if it fell short of a universal success, or left any party or any class in possession of a reasonable and substantial grievance. In the Church I have never yet had to deal with any really religious Nonconformist whom I did not wish to see in our own communion, and for whose sake I did not wish to see removed, or waived, the obstacles in his way, if possible.

Unity—that is, the unity of the good, the unity of believers—appears highest, first and last, in the life, the ministry, the preaching, the prayers, and the passion of our Lord. There is no stronger note of truth, no more stringent test, than unity. Under difficulties that might seem to increase rather than diminish, unity was still the key-note of Apostolic doctrine. Unity was imperilled by doctrinal novelties, and by the intrusion of matter which had nothing to do with the spiritual graces promised and given in Christ. Disunion, divisions, and offences of all kinds there would be, but woe to those by whom these would come. No such offences could there be without blame to some, and it would always be the duty of the Church to find out where the blame rested. The hope of unity was never to fail: the obligation of unity was never to expire. Wherever and whenever there was not unity, there was a question waiting to be answered, and a cause to be tried. But they that asked the question, and that claimed to hear and adjudicate, were bound to be clear themselves, and to have no beam in their own eyes while they undertook to pull out the mote from the eyes of others.

These may seem truisms, and the utterance of

them may seem a gratuitous hypocrisy. Strange to say, some with whom I have talked over this matter discard such considerations altogether, and throw unity quite out of the range of Christian hope and duty. 'Unity,' they say, 'will never be. The world, especially the English people, will have a way of their own. We have been only too glad to separate from Rome, as Rome certainly provoked gratuitously the disruption of Christendom. The Dissenters have done as their mother did before them. From every dissenting body there is a new dissent. All dissent is for dissent's sake. Nobody will thank you for unity.' Confessedly the facts are adverse. Nevertheless it must ever remain a mere opinion whether the humours of men, their weaknesses, their follies, their pride, and their other rebellious instincts, are always and everywhere to carry the day against a plain promise and an equally plain command to seek unity and peace between all Christian people. Human obstacles may be submitted to calculation, and even to something like worldly wisdom.

But there is one question, unhappily a large and comprehensive one, which does not submit to calculation, and which cannot be modified, or avoided, by common prudence, or even political sagacity. It is a question that cannot but have occurred to any one who for a long period of time, and in various circumstances, has had to consider how there comes to be a wall of separation, a great gulf not to be passed, between him and some of the best Christians about him.

That question is, whether the very words which we of the Church of England make the very corner-

stone of the spiritual edifice, the Shibboleth, the password, be indeed a truth of revelation, and, as such, the proper bond of Christian union. Are we justified in forcing them upon everybody claiming brotherhood in Christ? Are we right? Are they wrong if they will not accept our conditions? Who is to blame for the schism?

It is sometimes possible to give an answer that imparts a momentary satisfaction. The Christians not of us are Christians after the manner of their fathers. Or, with strong religious feelings, they have not the particular cultivation that can appreciate our services. But when the minister has thus silenced his own irrepressible misgivings ten thousand times ten thousand, there will survive the consciousness that this is a wrong state of things, and that after all the fault may be rather in ourselves than in those whom we find everywhere in a sort of religious war against us.

Possibly after all they are, in one sense, only too genuine sons of our own Church. Possibly they set up for themselves because we do; hold gratuitous opinions because we do; set up idols of the will or of the imagination as we do; intrude into the counsels or into the very presence of the Almighty as we do; speculate and philosophise on the Eternal as we do; scatter curses as we do; seek the favour of princes and hold to the arm of power as we do; convert the kingdom of heaven into some sort of secular dominion as we do—in a word, act our part as slavishly as the reflection in a mirror follows the movements of any one before it.

But I am told that the question, even if it be not one of capricious and unaccountable preferences, is much more one of authority than of doctrine. No possible revision of our creeds and formularies, it is said, would affect those who insist first of all on the absolute right of private judgment, or of the particular congregation, or of the State, or of the majority of the Christian people in it. So little, it is said, do the objections of our Nonconformists relate to doctrine that the majority of them are proud to accept all our creeds, and our doctrine generally, and call themselves orthodox, and even Trinitarians. They object to Church and State, to State-appointed bishops, to the parochial system in the form of private patronage, marketable livings, irremovable incumbents, monopoly of souls, and spiritual, or rather, as it often is, unspiritual, despotism.

No doubt these are obstacles — insurmountable obstacles, as long as they exist in their present form. But in all these matters it is easy to conceive and to forecast amendment, for the whole course of politics nowadays is in the direction of gradual reform. None can suppose that the Church of England is the only irreformable thing in this country, the only thing from which justice, common fairness, common sense, and propriety itself, are utterly and hopelessly excluded.

But as soon as these externals and secularities come to be handled, there will certainly reappear the old controversies which councils have dealt with deceitfully, and emperors and kings with a strong hand. In the face of this whole country—for it is the whole

country that is called into council when a matter is once before Parliament—it will be found impossible to maintain, as part of our law and constitution, dogmatic statements which to the great majority of Christians are unintelligible, absurd, and devoid of all real significance.

Should the rulers and influential personages of this State and this Church make up their minds to defer all consideration of dogma till the inevitable hour of national trial, they may by so doing purchase a sort of peace in their time. But the day cannot be very far distant when the Church of England will be called on to prove its claims to be the Church of the nation. She will have need not to be 'ashamed' when she speaks with her 'enemies in the gate.' The difficulty of that great cause will not be a little aggravated by the unpreparedness of many of our clergy. They will assuredly find themselves fighting for a cause they do not understand, under leaders themselves at variance, and consequently more or less erroneous. They may find themselves by that time a sad minority, standing at the bar of the nation, the great court of appeal to which all public questions are here carried. They may have to look in vain for advocates competent to unfold and declare their cause. If our clergy are to do justice to themselves, even while fighting a losing battle, they must prove their armour and acquire the use of their weapons while there is yet the time for it.

CHAPTER CXXVIII.

THE ATHANASIAN CREED IMPERSONAL AND UNREAL.

IT is frequently asserted with great confidence that the creeds are but epitomes or compendiums of Scripture: that they are expressed in the very words of the sacred text: that if these words startle us in the creeds they should also startle us in the Bible, and that if there be any quarrel with the creeds it must necessarily not stop short of the inspired writers. It is admitted, indeed, that there are words in the creeds not to be found in the sacred text. But these are either grammatical variations of words found in it, or logical terms the sense of which depends on the matter of the argument.

Now, if it were indeed the case that, with exceptions not worth notice, the creeds are simply a mosaic of sacred texts, and that they declare just what the Bible does and no more, that would be a conclusive argument for leaving the Bible to tell its own tale, and for not interposing any medium or device for helping the reader to make out what the Bible means. Abstracts, summaries, and even abridgments are apt to be dull things, made with much loss of personality, history, and circumstance, and stripping truth itself of all that makes truth interesting. Supposing all the creeds, therefore, to deserve what their advocates deem to think their best eulogy, it would still be open to inquirers to say that, even if it be so,

they would rather learn their faith from the Bible itself.

I am not myself sufficiently acquainted with the Fathers and Doctors of the Church to be able to say whether this be a common and ancient description of the creeds. So far as I can venture to say, it is true of the 'Apostles' Creed'; and I could not deny it to be true of the 'Nicene Creed.' It is plainly not true of the 'Athanasian Creed,' or of the so-called explanation of the 'Apostles' Creed' in our Church Catechism. But even where it may have to be admitted that the words of the creed are those of the sacred text, it is impossible to overlook that the sense of a word very frequently depends on the context, so that a word taken out of one context and placed in another may bear a different signification, or one more determined than it bore in the original context.

In point of fact, the creeds were designed to be not mere compendiums, but still more interpretations of Scripture. This process of interpretation, or, as many understood it, of discovering, by the largest possible collation, what was the mind of the Church, proceeded with comparative modesty and reverence for several centuries—that is, so long as the ruling spirits of the Church were men of the old classical culture. It was far otherwise when the learned barbarians of the West aspired to teach the Church better than they had been taught themselves. Like all half-civilised people they were more rhetorical than logical, and only pressed logic into their service to misuse it.

In the 'Apostles' Creed,' after declaring our belief in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and

Earth,' we proceed to declare our belief in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. We do not even give the title of God to Jesus Christ, and what follows in the creed does not necessarily imply such godhead as we ascribe to God the Father. The framers of the 'Nicene Creed' evidently did all they could to give the highest and most distinct possible significance to the title 'Only Son.' They bade us declare Jesus Christ to be 'One'; to be the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before the worlds. These words are rather explanations of the title 'Only Son' than additions to it. Only a small fraction of the great Christian brotherhood would find any difficulty in them.

The Nicene Fathers then added 'God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God'—that is, true God of true God. It is evident, and it must have been evident from the beginning, that the word 'of' here has to be interpreted, and is, indeed, incapable of exact determination. The greatest authority in the Church of England has ruled that it implies derivation and subordination. A very great living authority has laid down that this opinion, as stated, falls short of the truth, and he accordingly substitutes another, which I have no wish to meddle with. Many diverse opinions have been held by persons agreeing in the formula 'God of God.' Some of these differences would, of course, arise from the senses attached to the word 'only-begotten'; but even they who hold the reality of the 'eternal generation' are apt to diverge when they come to the very words intended to explain and strengthen the doctrine.

How then did the very apocryphal inventors of the Athanasian Creed deal with this mystery—for such the Nicene Creed had left it? In their exposition of the Trinity they entirely dropped the important word 'of.' 'God of God,' so reiterated and illustrated in the Nicene Creed, they omitted altogether. 'Son of God' is only found in the second part of the creed, on the Incarnation—that is, in the statement 'that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.' The title 'Son of God' is intensely and unmistakably personal. It is applied in Scripture to the most striking and indisputable personality the world ever saw.

The first part of the Athanasian Creed dealing with three Persons in one God has nothing to say to this personality. It is a theory of the Trinity as it was before the worlds. It belongs not to time, nor to this world, nor to the human race, nor to anything that ever came to pass or is to come to pass in this world. It is a description of three Persons forming one unity from all eternity, styled respectively Father, Son, and Spirit, and having mutual relations perfectly independent of all created things.

The Trinity thus described must be absolutely a mystery. It concerns not the Father, or the Son, or the Spirit, in any relation to ourselves. We are not allowed even to imagine any matter of their communications one with the other. They are three distinct Beings who are yet one. As there is no known element, no circumstance, no act, no moral conception, no intention, nothing whatever that to human apprehension constitutes character, individuality, action, or

even existence, in the description of this mystery, it cannot be easy for even a profound metaphysician, or an expert dialectician, to affirm or to deny it, or to say what there is to affirm or to deny. As difficult is it to show on what principle of common justice, let alone Divine mercy, it is incumbent upon us, on peril of eternal damnation, to ascertain exactly the relation of three 'Persons' as they existed prior to all creation, indeed from all eternity.

Grant that theologians and philosophers cannot but cast their eyes backward to the never beginning of time: of what use can it possibly be to compel such inquiries on the vast majority of Christians, reduced by the necessities of daily life to narrow conceptions of space and time? Abstractions are to them not even shadows: they are names and no more.

Church-people are often bidden to remember, as if they had forgotten it or were not even aware of it, that there is a second part to the creed. It must be confessed they have sometimes need to be so reminded. Nor is it at all wonderful. The second part reads as if the authors had forgotten what should be the chief matter of a Christian creed, Christ Himself.

Many a clergyman, upon mounting his pulpit steps, or perhaps not till descending them, has suddenly remembered that there was nothing about Christ in his sermon—Jesus not once named, perhaps not even alluded to. One can imagine some such qualm coming over the framers of this treatise, or hymn, or whatever it is to be called. The Incarnation appears as an afterthought. From first to last the Holy Spirit is

seen only through the vista of backward-reckoned eternities. As far as concerns ourselves and the human race, we might never have heard whether there be a Holy Ghost that we are concerned with, for any help the Athanasian Creed has been to us.

The first part of the creed is a complete creed in itself, carefully distinguished from the second part relating to the Incarnation. It begins and ends with the tremendous threat that without the full reception and holding of it we cannot be saved. Yet never was there an account of the Deity so bare, so minute, so utterly devoid—I say not of sublimity, reverence, or love—but of morality and practical significance. There is not a word of what God is to us, or what the Son is to us, or what the Holy Spirit is to us. There is not a word of what the Father does, or the Son does, or the Holy Spirit does. The creed has been likened, even by an admirer, to a mathematical process—a demonstration by the differential calculus. It might even be compared to a chemical analysis. But for the convenience of the calculation the 'Persons' are reduced to signs. The Father ceases to be father; the Son ceases to be son; the Spirit ceases to be spirit.

Waterland, who constituted himself the special champion of the Athanasian Creed, and wrote volumes upon it, disposes easily of every word and act of our Lord implying Sonship in any sense intelligible to human beings. Every such word and act was, he says, the same thing as if done or said by the Almighty—that is, by the Father. To my apprehension, this is Sabellianism and nothing more—un-

less it be pure Deism, with a filigree of theological terms.

With regard to what our Lord said and did and suffered on earth, we may make different estimates, but we cannot be said to be quite out of our depth, nor need we make any serious blunders. But it really is quite impossible even for practised theologians to pass out of creation, and describe eternity, without immediately stumbling one way or another, contradicting one another and even themselves. The Athanasian Creed says that our Lord Jesus Christ is 'Equal to the Father, as touching His Godhead: and inferior to the Father, as touching His Manhood.' Professor Burton was a very learned, very painstaking, and very orthodox theologian. He collected and published the principal testimonies of all the Ante-Nicene Fathers bearing on the 'Trinity,' and, in his Introduction to his larger work, p. xiv., I find him saying, 'The Catholic Church has always held that Christ had a human nature, and that, as a Son begotten of God, He was so far inferior to the Father.' These two statements cannot be reconciled. The Athanasian Creed says that the Son is inferior to the Father (only) as touching His Manhood. Dr. Burton, after studying all the Fathers and comparing them with the Nicene Creed, says that the Son is inferior to the Father as touching His Sonship (also).

I must repeat that I never yet have had the courage to attempt to discover what any human being, old or young, male or female, educated or simple, understood by the creed. So much did I dread the too probable answers. On the other hand,

I have never been asked a question about it. I should probably have made some reply considered to indicate profound ignorance. But I may conscientiously say I would as soon make an ignorant reply myself as elicit one from anybody I at all cared for, a parishioner, or a young neighbour.

I am quite certain that the creed, resting as it does on logic and grammar, cannot stand the logical and grammatical test. This amounts to saying that I am certain it is not sense. Even waiving for the present the ridiculous, not to say blasphemous, use of the word 'Person,' the common sense of mankind must reply that if the Father, the Son, and the Spirit be each God in the same identical sense of that awful word, then there are three Gods; and that if the Son be such as the Father is, then whatever we may say of the Father we may say of the Son. In like manner, if the Spirit be such as the Father is, then whatever we may say of the Father we may say of the Spirit. To human apprehension this is equivalent to saying that the Father is the Son and the Spirit; the Son is the Father and the Spirit; the Spirit is the Father and the Son. Theologians, indeed, accept this inference and give a long name to it.

I shall be told that I cannot go so far without going further, and that what I say applies to the use of the word 'substance' in the Nicene Creed. That I must admit to some extent, for I must frankly confess I think the word, as used, a mistake, and certainly liable to breed the most ridiculous errors. I suppose in this jargon, for such I must call it, the

word 'substance' means that which can properly be said of any person or thing. It is true that this definition of the word does not make the creed sense; but I am not aware of any other. But to the common apprehension—that is, to the understanding of all the congregations I have had to deal with—substance means matter or element. As the ancients talked of human blood and divine blood, of the lower atmosphere and an empyreum, of human banquets and divine, and as they attributed to the deities knowledge and powers only greater in degree compared with those of mortals, so the word 'substance' inevitably ties the mind to the earthly level.

But, it will be said, it is the business of the clergy to explain the creed, and to guard it from misapprehension. I have done my best to explain it from the pulpit on Trinity Sunday, and occasionally on other Sundays, but I have never ventured to ascertain how far I have been understood.

The word 'incomprehensible' is an alteration, and to some extent an addition to the creed. In the original it is, 'The Father is immense,' or immeasurable—that is, infinite in regard to space; 'the Son immense; and the Holy Ghost immense.' Infinity in regard to space is more conceivable than infinity in regard to time, inasmuch as infinite space can be conceived in some fashion, whereas infinite time backwards altogether beats conception. Yet the statement that the Son is immense, or immeasurable, in plain English would have been almost intolerable.

'Incomprehensible,' then, is not an exact substitution. It means both less and more, and suggests

meanings that must have been beyond the intention of the framers of the creed. 'Comprehend' is familiarly used to mean 'understand'; but it is not intended that we cannot understand God, or the Son, or the Spirit. Not a few, indeed, go on to say that they cannot understand the creed itself, and that they so far fulfil the design of the framers. The word 'incomprehensible' means that which passes understanding. It is, however, applied to much that can never be the subject of measurement, and that has indeed no dimensions.'

So far the English translation says more than the original, for the translation includes the love and the wisdom of God as passing human understanding. The original restricts itself to mathematical ideas, and therefore excludes love and wisdom as not coming within the scope of the creed, even though our eternal salvation is to depend on it.

In this respect the creed runs curiously apart from the line taken by the Apostle to the Gentiles. He, too, claimed immensity for the great truths he had to declare, but it is in a passage in which he is supposed to be alluding to the vain pride with which the Ephesians regarded their temple, and bidding them rather to seek to comprehend the breadth, and length, and depth, and height of the love of God.

In this very passage St. Paul tells the Ephesians that all saints can comprehend the love of God—that is, God Himself in His relations to us. So it is not true to say that God, or the Son, or the Spirit is wholly and absolutely incomprehensible. On the contrary, the whole constitution of man, and of the

universe, is framed to make us comprehend God to some extent, and understand Him to some extent, that is, as far as can be under the manifold limitations of a finite system.

Yet, in truth, all men, indeed all things, are more or less comprehensible; more or less incomprehensible. Every human being has much within him, and in his very nature, that none, not he himself, can understand. What is called knowledge of human nature, experience, self-examination, the study of metaphysics, and the Divine assistance, enable some to enter into the secrets of the heart and mind more than others. But the fact itself continually baffles investigation, and man to man, nay, man to himself, is still an incomprehensible being. Whether in regard to man or the Deity, we must still confess the presence of a mystery, partly within the reach of our faculties, but infinitely more beyond their reach. Of the soul of man, or that which distinguishes him from the brute, no better account can be given than that it is a particle of divinity, and that so far we are all sons of God, and gods. This implies that we have within us, and are bound to recognise in all human beings, that which is incomprehensible. Such indeed is everybody's experience, and the whole history of human affairs, of philosophy, of religion, of culture and of 'thought,' as it is called, testifies to it.

CHAPTER CXXIX

INTELLECTUAL DIFFICULTIES FOREIGN TO THE MATTER AND STYLE OF THE BIBLE.

CANNOT recall a single word in the Bible that seems designedly to present an intellectual or a moral difficulty. The Book is, throughout, a revelation intended o bring light out of darkness, to make crooked ways straight, and, across hills and valleys, to make highways for the weakest to pass along. In very few nstances is the meaning not quite plain. Of course, I leave out questions of the right text, or of dates, or of names, and other matters for the scholar. But, with no exception to speak of, there is always a meaning sufficient to the occasion, for the context, for the argument, for the dignity of the subject. There is nothing to call a puzzle, a riddle, or a conundrum. There is nothing for the brains to labour upon in the hope of a barren victory. Every idea in the Bible is easy, familiar—vulgar indeed. The readers are only invited to know and feel better what they know in some fashion already. It is always something antici pated. It is the desire of all nations; it is the groaning and travailing of the whole creation; it is the return of the golden age; it is the Messiah, the true Son of David, the hope of Israel, the day of deliverance, the restitution of all things.

The great *facts* of revelation are no addition to our intellectual or moral difficulties. They appeal to our

faith rather than to our intellect. The creation of the world by the fiat of Omnipotence in a given period of time is not more inconceivable than a process of evolution spun out for billions of centuries. The Deluge may be a difficulty to men of science, but a child can imagine it. If we are told that under the first conditions of vitality people lived a thousand years, there are some who tell us there is no reason why we should not live as long now; others who tell us it is a miracle that we survive from day to day. The Ark is a conceivable thing, by daily experience. As for the miracles, both of the Old Testament and of the New, they all lie under the common stigma of being the too ready growth of a pious credulity and a pliant imagination. The Incarnation certainly is as conceivable as the creation of Adam, which itself is far more conceivable than any other hypothesis of his coming into existence. We may or may not choose to believe the Resurrection and the Ascension; but all mankind, down to the veriest idiot, can fashion them to the mind's eye. The very 'babes' understood our Lord's discourses. If the Disciples sometimes failed, it was not for want of intellect, but because they had conceived certain earthly aspirations, and could not bear anything to the contrary. If Nicodemus failed, it was because he was wedded to his Pharisaical system. The difficulty was always moral, even when it showed itself in the form of a philosophy, as in the case of the Stoics and Epicureans.

Nowhere in the Bible are people commanded, on peril of eternal damnation, to believe anything absolutely inconsistent with mathematics and arithmetic.

Nowhere are mere numbers made a question of life or death.

I shall be told that even if the difficulty be not presented to us in one text or in a number of texts, it is nevertheless forced upon us by the necessary comparison of one text with another, and of many texts with many others. Even if it be granted that texts and texts have to be harmonised, I reply that they have also to be harmonised with another text as much God's giving as the Bible itself can be supposed to be: That text is reason, to which God and His servants have ever appealed.

Theologians themselves find so much difficulty in identifying to their own satisfaction a real unity, with a triple personality equally real, that they have recourse to very gratuitous and dangerous suppositions. I see it suggested that, for aught we know, there may be no such thing as numeration in Heaven. That is a curious reason for taking fresh courage to say there are Three Divine Persons in one God—that is, in the Lord of Heaven and Earth. But the Athanasian Creed, in the first part, deals emphatically with Heaven, and in point of fact leaves Earth and Mankind entirely out of account. It declares the nature and consistency of God from eternity to eternity, and in all space as well as all time.

Yet I hail with much relief the teaching that we know nothing about Heaven. In the course of a long life many ideas have presented themselves to me, such perhaps as I ought to have dispelled, or at least never exercised my mind upon. I have imagined an

infinity of worlds, infinitely various kinds of moral agents, infinite Sons of God, in infinite gradations—all in one Divine unity—that is, under one origination, order, and authority. It is plain I could have no just basis for such conceptions, unless I chose to find it in the few and marvellous glimpses of angelic life and ministration. I feel assured that I have no right to concern myself with the interior of Heaven, much less of the Deity. I certainly have no right to impose on the poor souls committed to my care, as articles of faith, any notions of the Deity, wholly gratuitous, as I believe, and impossible not only of belief, but even of conception.

The theologians who are credited with having devoted themselves to the solution of the Trinitarian difficulty, and with having mastered it, had often to change and even to interchange the very terms of the question, the same word being used successively for both Substance and Person. It is often said with a sort of intellectual flourish that it is not necessary ploughmen should thoroughly understand these questions, or thoroughly appreciate the conclusions arrived at. For anything I have seen in the writings of theologians of all the centuries, and all the Churches, they do not know what they are about a bit more than so many ploughmen, only they have more command of language, and are not quite so civil one to another. They seem to me like a cloud of moths flying to what they think the light of day, and burning themselves in it. Ploughmen, without much education, and with no great strain on their reasoning powers, believe in God, His Son, and His Spirit, though they

don't go out of their way to make a mystic number or a pretty figure of it.

The theologians boast to be logical, and as far as can be from any kind of materialism. Adopting the term 'substance' for the key-stone of their arch, they utterly disclaim all the ideas that must necessarily occur in connection with the word; but on the other hand they find it impossible to allow the word to be used to express all that can be properly said of a Being. Though the Athanasian Creed says such as the Father is such is the Son, theologians cannot quite bring themselves to say that the Father is the Son, and has sent Himself into the world, or that He was with Himself, and was Himself before the worlds, and so forth.

So they have fallen on a mid course, as they think it, but one which I must say is but a very poor standing ground for a great controversy. Substance, they tell us, is to be used, in a restricted sense, for whatever may be said of the Divine nature or consistency —that is, whatever constitutes Godhead. This makes the word synonymous with Godhead. But Godhead is not God, or a person at all. It is divinity, that is, the quality or 'nature' of God, and this is all the meaning that can be attached to 'substance.' It is true that the Greeks would use the singular noun to comprise all the gods, and the plural noun to express the divine element, but the precedent is at least questionable.

The charm of the Bible, as a book, is the beauty, the simplicity, and the grandeur of its ideas and conceptions. They often recall to me the saying of a distinguished writer, who lived, I hope, to retract it,

that the Jews were a very childish people. The writers all appeal to the young as well as to the old, the unlearned as well as the learned. They confine themselves to that which is at least conceivable, conceivable, that is to say, on the face of it, in its outset, and in its growth, even though it may finally pass beyond present conception. To take a crucial instance, the word I AM means absolute existence, independent of all temporal vicissitudes, the source of all lesser being. In its full sense it is incomprehensible, for the finite cannot contain the infinite. On the other hand, absolute existence is the most conceivable and universal of all ideas to the extent of our respective capacities. It really lies at the root of all our healthier wishes and nobler pursuits.

CHAPTER CXXX.

ANCIENT THEISM AND POLYTHEISM.

THE early Church consisted of Jewish and Gentile converts, more or less philosophical, more or less pagan—that is, more or less imbued with minor beliefs. It thus stepped into all the difficulties, and, it must be added, the facilities of heathen theology. The heathen appear to have found no difficulty in imagining one God, either distinct from matter, or including and possessing it, as the mind the body. They found it still more easy to imagine and, after a manner, to believe in any number of gods, whether

from one origin and in one divine hierarchy, or presenting themselves out of the infinite in all forms and fashions. Divine generation was amongst the most familiar of all their ideas, though it is plain the story of heaven was founded on that below. That God should beget a Son, and send Him into the world, was to them not only natural, but it might even be said necessary. This Son, according to all their notions, would be God ; and that He should be the Image of His Father, and should represent His Father, and occupy His Father's throne, would be simply an improvement on much of pagan theology.

Nevertheless the more enlightened heathen always had an inkling and a preference for pure theism, subordinating multiplicity to unity. The mass of the people were polytheists, with a mixture of theism ; the more educated were theists in their philosophy, though always ready to make polytheistic compliances. Pantheism, of course, included the one and the many. Unity characterises materialism and evolution by whatever law.

There were thus two educating influences. Paganism everywhere met the senses ; philosophy appealed to the understanding. The one was the nursery, the other the school. Both contributed to the ideas then possessing the seats of learning, and constituting the medium through which new truths would have to reach the world. The task devolved on the existing teachers and rhetoricians, hitherto unaccustomed to think seriously what they meant by the words that flowed easily from their tongues into the ears of their pupils or their classes. It is a comparatively

recent thing in the history of the human mind for men to inquire seriously and painfully into the precise signification of the words in common use. No doubt the wonderful development of material science, and the increased exactness of commercial transactions, have had something to do with a more conscientious terminology.

Now, even if we wished it ever so much, we could not throw ourselves into the half-pagan, half-philosophical—that is, half-polytheistic, half-deistic—atmosphere of the early Church. Its creeds can never recall to us the ideas pervading human thought at the time they were compiled as the best medium between Divine revelation and the human intellect. We really are not able to find what the creeds, or what the Fathers generally, meant in those days; still less what the words mean now. Even if we think we know what the authors meant, it does not follow that we can now use the words in their intended sense.

When a positive and elaborate and highly artificial theology becomes the law of the land, part of the constitution itself, a legal currency and qualification, imperative by one penalty or another, it is no longer to be expected that the terms invested with such substantial consequences and such penal force shall pass muster as if they related only to what is remote or unseen. If people think less of divine things than they did centuries ago, if they do not look heavenward as intently as their forefathers did, and if they can hardly be persuaded to believe in a terrible alternative, they can still be critical, and even just, in their social and public relations. They have a

sense of justice, and they hate persecution. All the instincts of the age, and all the lessons of experience, will urge them to ascertain the meaning of words dividing the population of this country into hostile camps, establishing a monopoly of religious rights and privileges, and creating castes compelled almost by the necessities of their position to distrust one another.

Can we ever be sure that we understand the terms of the Athanasian Creed so thoroughly as to know what is the hard and fast line dividing those who believe they hold it from those who have no such belief —who are content perhaps to say that they don't know what to think about it? Certainly it is important we should know what we mean when we pronounce a form of words, and finish by sentencing all who dissent from it to an absolute forfeiture of God's covenanted mercies. I am told, again and again, that there can be no real difficulty in understanding the creed to those who accept and presumably understand the Bible, for that the creed does nothing more than place in a synoptical and harmonious form some of the most prominent and familiar declarations of Holy Writ. I cannot bring myself to agree with this view. So far from being simply scriptural, I believe the creed to be extra-scriptural, and even unscriptural.

CHAPTER CXXXI

THE INFINITE.

IN place or out of place, let me say more of the Infinite. I will suppose that I have some young lads about me. One or two of them can ask questions that no man can answer: the rest have at least curiosity. 'My young fellows, what is the Infinite?' One of them answers, 'Space without bounds, and time without end.' 'So far, so good,' I reply; 'though you have left out that eternity can have had no beginning; and I have my own doubts whether eternity is time, or infinity is space. But let us take your definition of infinity.

'First, let us see what is meant by space without bounds. I will give you what they call in national schools an object-lesson. You see this bit of glass. Direct your attention to the dark spot in the middle of it.' 'I see no spot,' they all exclaim. 'Don't you? I am afraid you have a beam in your eyes then, for the spot is certainly there. Look closer and harder.' 'We do, and we can't see it.' 'You ought to see it. I confess I don't myself, but at your age your eyesight must be much better than mine. Here is a microscope given me as a prize sixty years ago for answering some questions on bees, ants, and tadpoles. Now look for the spot.' 'We can't see it still.' 'Can nobody see it?' 'Nobody. It cannot be there.' 'Knowing it to be just possible this old microscope would not be powerful enough I have borrowed

the best in the county, and the kind owner is here to fix it. One of you go into the drawing-room, and ask the gentleman there to step in with his microscope. Make way. Don't press too near. It's a delicate piece of workmanship and must not be touched.'

After a good deal of trouble, and after passing the bit of glass several times under the lens, my friend proclaims the spot visible. The lads all look in turn, and see a spot. 'This microscope,' I proceed, 'multiplies a thousand times. It would take ten thousand such spots to cover the eye of a common house-fly.' 'Is that what the lecture is to be about? Why, it's nothing.' 'It's something, for you have seen it, and the more you think about it the more will you see that it is something. It might be larger certainly, but it might also be less. There are objects which are less. We know there are.

'But we will take this for our subject, which is about as little as you can easily conceive. Compare this spot with the bit of glass it is upon.' 'Why, it's quite lost in it.' 'Pardon me, we've found it. I will confine myself to the linear dimension. It would take maybe twenty thousand such spots to make a line the length of a foot-rule. How many such spots would make a mile?' 'Oh, that's ridiculous.' 'No: It's easily computed. You've only to multiply by five thousand, in round numbers. Our sum then mounts to nine places. But, not to linger upon lesser distances, how many such spots would take us to the sun? It's multiplying by a hundred millions, and it brings up our sum to seventeen places. Multiplication, you will see, is a powerful engine.'

We will now go further. I will not stop at the nearest fixed star, or even at the most distant stars of which the distance can be conjectured. We will proceed at once to the smallest of the hundred thousand stars that can be at all distinguished and placed in a map. For that it may be sufficient to multiply our last figure by five millions, which supposes that the most distant telescopic star is five million times further off than our sun. This brings our sum up to twenty-three places of figures. We have to double the sum for the extent right and left of the point where we are supposed to stand, and then the proportion of this spot we have with difficulty discovered on this bit of glass to all the universe within reach of our telescopes — that is, as regards the first or linear dimension — is that of a unit to a sum denoted by a unit, followed by twenty-three ciphers. That would occupy about four-fifths of a line in this printed page, leaving space to multiply the sum by a million more. This poor little spot thus occupies a definite and assignable space in the whole creation, so far as we can see it. The whole sidereal universe, as far as a telescope can reach, is only a hundred thousand million billion times wider across than this almost invisible spot.

But now advance another step. Take the whole creation as far as we can see it, including the hundred thousand telescopic stars, and subject it to the same inquiry. What space does it occupy in comparison with infinity? What number of numerals will represent the proportion of all that comes within the range of our vision to that which is beyond it:

the proportion of the known to the unknown, though mathematically undeniable. No number of numerals that we could make, or imagine, though reaching from the furthest star on our right hand to the furthest star on our left, would adequately, or at all, represent the nothingness of the whole visible universe in the comparison with true infinity. This spot on the table is measurable. The visible universe is measurable. Infinity is immeasurable.

So, too, is it with time. Our *savans* ask for hundreds of thousands of years. Give them years that could only be represented by numerals reaching across the visible universe, it is all but a momentary flash in comparison with true eternity.

Such thoughts are too overpowering to be habitual. They may be looked at as one looks over a precipice. It feels like the self-annihilation of humanity and everything it knows of. For it makes the universe less, in a manner, than this invisible spot on the table before us. It makes us feel ourselves nothing. But cannot we turn the tide of such horrible thoughts? Cannot we produce what doctors call a reaction? Is this perpetual sinking and diminution in harmony with the rest of our being? That it certainly is not.

We will begin with the dark microscopic spot again— that is, each one of us in this atom of a visible universe. Every one of us has infinity—ay, the Infinite—in himself. Every one of us conceives infinity, bows to it, scans it, however imperfectly, fills it, cherishes a perpetual yearning to bridge over the abyss, and cheerfully believes, or fearfully suspects,

that it is the abode of a Being as infinite in His power and moral perfection as in His extent and duration. Each one of us has this in himself, and so far each one of us is infinite in space and time, and in and of the Almighty.

Is there not much significance in the fact that when we attempt to escape the narrow bounds of earth we find ourselves 'dragging a lengthening chain,' and that when we would reach the Heaven of Heavens we find ourselves sprawling in the dust? The shortest glimpse of the Infinite blinds and paralyses us. If we persist, it is only to be crushed and buried under the Ossa upon Pelion of an audacious speculation. By every argument of reason, piety, common sense, and experience, this earth is our sphere of action, and it is with the inhabitants of this earth that our accounts have first to be settled.

But I must now acquit myself of this my present task. At the outset of it I spoke of a message accepted from the late Primate—a message of peace, as it was hopefully worded. That message should be the sum of these pages, the just inference which a gentle or candid reader might draw from them. Unless he have drawn that inference himself, it may be of small avail now to offer any assistance. I have attempted no grand argument: I have not proceeded step by step to any climax: I have not composed annals, or delivered myself of memoirs, or told a story. Both as to the construction and as to the contents of these volumes I am at the mercy of my critics. I can only hope, though I cannot be sure, that my readers will so far anticipate my own verdict

as to spare me the necessity of much further explanation.

As I review my own life, and many more lives that would be thought better worth the reviewal, I have a continually increasing conviction that there is only one course open to all such Christians in these isles as wish a way of escape from our present difficulties. If they really wish for peace, let them ensue it. If they desire union, let them stretch out brotherly hands. Where there is a will there is a way; and I feel sure that if there does arise a general approachment of feeling, and a real desire for union in Christ, a way will present itself. If on the one side there is less thought of exclusion, and on the other side less thought of separation; if Christians will not be so quick to ban one another or to avoid one another, then it seems almost a duty to believe that the instincts of brotherhood and the power of the Spirit will prevail. The actual and formal improvement which I seem to discern in the coming future cannot but be slow. All experience is against the probability and even the advisableness of sudden conversion from one communion to another. Converts in this sense are not a numerous class, happily for themselves and for other people. I may at once say that I could not myself lightly recommend any Dissenter to quit for the Church the particular form of religion with which his spiritual life has been identified. It would be a certain loss, always with a doubtful gain. But what does this imply? That these differences, these different modes, different opinions, and different forms of expression, are not essential, and are generally more human than Divine.

I much desire that all sides would insist on the fact that by the law of the land and the law of the Church everybody in this country is so far a member of the Church as to have a rightful claim to all it can offer. In the eye of the Church of England, Dissenters of every kind are but so many societies within its one bosom. In point of fact, Wesleyans, Baptists, and Congregationalists do not assume a more hostile position to the local authorities of the Church than the great religious orders were doing before the Reformation. Our parochial clergy are our secular clergy; our Dissenting ministers our regular. In the face of that actual community of feeling and opinion which so often places Church-people and Dissenters on the same public platform, and which induces them so often to declare themselves brothers, I cannot but think it would be only consistent that clergy should be permitted to join Dissenters in acts of public worship, as well as on other public occasions of an equally religious character. As things now are the chapel is often the centre of religious activity; the church, no better in that respect than a tomb. The clergyman anxious to take his part in the religious life and work of the age finds himself deprived of the best heads, the best hearts, the best tongues, the best examples, and the most consistent lives and conversation in his village.

So great are the difficulties in the way of clerical, and even episcopal action, that I cannot but expect it will be from the people themselves that the deliverance will come. On the whole they prefer union to disunion. All our political controversies bring out the

fact that the British people love to believe themselves united, and strong in their unanimity. They are certain to learn, what indeed is the fact, that the Church Establishment is not only for them all, but theirs, in the sense of being amenable to their review and their determination in the usual Parliamentary methods and ways. The prospect of popular revision and reconstruction is not one to be shunned and, as far as possible, ignored; it is to be met and provided for. For this purpose it will be found necessary to remove, or at least to put in a subordinate position, all needless obstacles to union, and bring about such a practical union of all Christian people as shall make the Church of England stronger than its foes.

The battle must be fought, indeed it is already fought in the open field of a wide controversy pervading the whole country and dividing the whole population. In such a war, what avail the fortifications and bulwarks in which the engineers of a past age thought to entrench themselves and secure temporary possession? The answer is that of the prophet: 'Take away her battlements, for they are not of the Lord.'

THE END.

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